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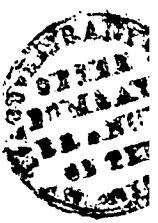
STUDIES IN

GERMAN LITERATURE



BY

BAYARD TAYLOR

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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INTRODUCTION.

It was the known intention of Bayard Taylor to prepare the material which composes the following work for publication. A partial arrangement for that purpose had been made between him and the present publishers. Had he lived to complete his plan, doubtless the form of the matter would have been changed, by adapting it to the reader rather than the hearer, and the scope of the whole work would have been enlarged and, here and there, elaborated, so as to complete a design which was necessarily restricted by the brief limits of time prescribed to a course of lectures.

However much additional interest might have been given to the work, had Taylor lived to carry out his purpose, the editors felt themselves to be unauthorized to attempt changes so serious, which might have left upon the volume the impress of their literary style and opinions rather than those of the actual author. Nothing beyond the corrections of verbal errors and of over-

sights has therefore been attempted. The original manuscripts of the author have been closely followed, even to the preservation of the lecture form, which, now and then, may seem to be better adapted to oral delivery, and to the sympathetic appreciation of a crowded lecture-room, than to critical examination under the dry light of the study.

The object at which Taylor aimed, in preparing his course of lectures for delivery before the students of Cornell University, in which institution he held an honorary professorship, was that the lectures should serve as an introduction to the literature of Germany. He claimed nothing more for them. Completely as he may have treated of some subjects—as in the lecture devoted to the dissection and the elucidation of the underlying moral purpose of "Faust," or in that one in which he makes clear and gives relative position to the strange and abnormal genius of Richter—in the main his object was rather to introduce, to interest and to invite the student to a further pursuit of the subject for himself, than to provide him with accurate and thorough knowledge of a field so wide as that of the literature of the most cultivated nation of Europe. Not one course of lectures nor many courses, not one volume nor many volumes, could have accomplished a task so

vast as a full critical history of German literature, from its remote Gothic sources to its gigantic product in Goethe and his famous contemporaries. The reader will therefore take these lectures for what they profess to be, at that value which the author himself set upon them, as a guide to intending students of German literature, and not as a profound commentary, addressed to those who are already well versed in the subject.

However modest may have been Taylor's aim in making his lectures elementary and popular, rather than profound and exclusive, such was the native power of his intellect and the depth of his knowledge of German literature, that, whenever he touches an author critically, he rises to a style of treatment that may win the admiration of the most scholarly, and furnish food for reflection to the most thoughtful. The lectures on Goethe and that greatest of modern poems, "Faust," and on that literary curiosity, half god and half mountebank, Jean Paul, are filled with the light of discovery, and abound with the most subtle and suggestive critical analysis. The marks of the same powerful hand may be discerned throughout the other lectures. Taylor touched nothing that he did not beautify; nothing came beneath his eye that did not glow with

an infectious light; fresh truth was born of every old truth which he disclosed; and so great was his reverence for intellectual superiority, that the heroes of his theme rose into demi-gods through his mere companionship.

The difference between a lecture and a treatise is as great as that between an oration and an essay. The former addresses itself to the mind, through the fleeting perceptions of the ear, and gives no time to the understanding for the revising process of thought. The style of the lecture should be simple, direct and forcible. It should not be so elaborate and complex, in its manner of announcing truth, as to call upon the logical powers of the hearer, lest the thread of the discourse be lost from the moment the effort at reasoning begins. An argument is out of place in a lecture. It should give us the fruits of the intellect rather than the process by which they matured. It should treat its subject dogmatically. It should pour itself, in an entire and unbroken stream, into the ear of the hearer, with a current that should bear him along, without the chance or the wish for a pause of reflection, satisfied with the present idea and eager for the next, both will and reason enchained, passive and compliant under the spell of the speaker's voice, postponing to another

occasion all intellectual differences and all doubts of the seeming truths which are uttered. These qualities will be found, as they should be found, in the lectures before us. The style is so pure and simple that no one can mistake the meaning of a sentence of the text, while it often attains to passages of unconscious eloquence, that must indeed have been striking when heightened by the noble presence, the skilful elocution and the earnest mien of the author.

Keeping in mind the wide difference of treatment that should be found in subjects addressed to the ear from those addressed to the eye, we know that we do Taylor scant justice in thus literally reproducing his lectures from the original manuscripts, rather than in the more elaborated form of the essay, into which he would have cast them for publication. We deprive them of his vitalizing presence, without instilling into them the new life which he might have given them with the after-touches of his fruitful pen, and we perpetuate in them qualities which, although both proper and admirable in oral delivery, may awaken cavil or antagonism when reproduced in hard print. This dilemma was, however, unavoidable. The editors feel themselves to be simply the intermediaries between the author and the public. However much these lectures might have

been improved by toning them down to the strict decorum of matter intended for publication, by excluding from them the forms in which audiences are addressed or appealed to, as well as certain familiarities and playfulnesses of phraseology—all quite fitting in a lecture, and enjoyable by the hearers;—yet we felt a reluctance to touch the text of Taylor with irreverent hands, or to tear to pieces even that which we meant to reconstruct, or to assume a responsibility in the act which the public might not be disposed to tolerate. Taylor was too high a character, and he filled too large a place in our literature, to be subjected, in the helplessness of death, to the wrong of having his work tampered with, even by tender hands, devoted to fulfilling a purpose of his own. The master's hand is as stiff as the pencil which he held, his blood is as dry as the colors upon his palette: let the pupils stand before his unfinished work in the stillness of reverence; but let no one impose a tone or a tint upon the canvas, lest the world of to-day and the world of to-morrow should say that the picture is not his.

G. H. B.

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I.

EARLIEST GERMAN LITERATURE.

EVERY one knows how much is added to our understanding of an author's works when we become acquainted with his biography. We thus discover what qualities he has inherited, what others have been developed through the vicissitudes of his life, and what have been attained by labor and aspiration. This is equally true of the literature of a race. It has its pedigree, its birth and childhood, its uncertain youth, and its varying fortunes through the ages, before it reaches a mature and permanent character. Although it grows in grace and variety of expression, and charms us most when it gives large and lofty utterance to the thought and feeling of our own times, we none the less need to turn back and listen to the prattle of its infancy.

I therefore propose to go back to the earliest known foundation from which German Literature grew, and to trace, in outlines which I shall try to make both simple and clear, the chief phenomena of its early life. The task is not easy; for the development of the literature of a people must inevitably take hold of History with one hand, and of Philology with the other,—both sciences essential to the intimate knowledge of all important

literary works, yet forbidden to me within the limits which I have chosen. But, even after avoiding, as far as may be possible, historical and philological digressions, I find myself embarrassed by the abundance of the purely literary material; for the annals of Germany not only extend much further into the past than those of England, but the research of her scholars has been longer and more laboriously employed in illuminating the dark corners of her history. The dullest chronicler, the most mechanical rhymester who ever turned the hand-organ of doggerel, if he has left but a paragraph or couplet behind him, is labelled and placed on his pedestal in the pantheon of early Teutonic letters; but, fortunately, no disguise of language, no magic of distance or the romance of circumstances, can wholly bewilder us. When we begin honestly and earnestly to study the records which have been preserved, we soon perceive the relative value of names and achievements, and it is not difficult to separate the few original, really creative minds from the crowd of imitators and secondary intelligences.

I shall, therefore, confine myself to those names and works which belong, by undoubted right, to the literary history of Germany,—the landmarks, sometimes wide apart, which indicate change and progress,—and shall simplify my task by the omission of many names which would furnish, at best, only a dry catalogue, difficult to remember, and of little value when remembered.

The aborigines of Germany had their bards, their battle-songs, and their sacrificial hymns, when they first became known to the Romans. From the little which Tacitus tells us, we are justified in inferring a more advanced stage of civilization among the Germans than is now implied in the term "barbarian." The Romans, like the Greeks, looked down upon all other races with a certain degree of contempt, and generally misrepresented both their condition and their capacities. When the emperor Julian the Apostate declares that the songs of the people on the Rhine sounded to him like the cries of birds of prey, his opinion is worth no more to us than that of any man now-a-days who thinks the German language harsh and disagreeable because his ear is not accustomed to the sound of it. About the time of Julian's short reign, a work was written, which has escaped to refute the inference which might be drawn from his statement,—or, at least, to render it very improbable. This work has only a philological relation to German literature, but the interest which it possesses in this respect is so remarkable,—it stands so entirely alone, with nothing before it, and nothing for nearly four hundred years after it,—that one must here pause, having found the starting-point of our investigations.

When the Goths commenced their migration westward from the plains north of the Black Sea, in the fourth century after Christ, they gradually became

Christianized on the way. One of the first converts, by name Ulfilas, born in the year 318, became a bishop of great sanctity, who was highly honored by the emperors of the East. He died in 388, immediately after attending the œcumenical council of Constantinople, where he defended the Arian doctrine. The Goths, I may here remark, remained Arians for three hundred years longer, and their priests read the services in their own language until the ninth century. Ulfilas translated the Bible, except the Books of Kings and Chronicles, into Gothic; and tradition says that he was obliged to invent an alphabet, as the Goths had no written language at that time. Copies of his translation were known to be in existence about the year 900; then they disappeared, and the work was lost to the world for more than six hundred years. The fact that Ulfilas was an Arian undoubtedly caused his translation to be regarded as heretical, and led to its suppression.

Toward the close of the sixteenth century, Mercator, who has given his name to his projection of the globe, discovered the four Gospels of Ulfilas in the Abbey of Werder, in Northern Germany. The ancient manuscript was carried to Prague, where, at the close of the Thirty Years' War, it fell into the hands of the Swedish Count Königsmark, who presented it to the University of Upsala. It is called the "*Codex Argenteus*," or silver codex, from its being illuminated in silver letters on purple parchment. In the year 1818, the

Epistles of St. Paul, in the translation of Ulfilas, were discovered in the monastery of Bobbio, in Lombardy. Thus we have recovered nearly the whole of the New Testament in Gothic, written within twenty or thirty years of the same time when the celebrated Greek manuscripts of Mount Sinai and the Vatican are believed to have been written.

The value of this work requires no explanation. The German scholars seem to be entirely agreed that the language of the Goths in the fourth century, thus risen to new life after centuries of death, is very superior to the German language, to which it gave birth, in harmony and purity of tone, in grammatical construction, in richness and precision of expression, and especially in dignity and power. They find it familiar and foreign at the same time, hinting its old relationship of blood and feeling, yet breathing of much that has been lost in the mixing of the races and washed away by time.

If the Gothic language be the legitimate mother of the Old German, it must also be, through the Saxon, the grandmother of English, and of the Swedish and Danish. A single passage from the Gospels of Ulfilas will make this evident, even to those who are not far advanced in German studies. I take the Lord's Prayer, which, phrase by phrase, can easily be compared with either the English or German words:

Atta unsar, thu in himinam, veihnai namo thein; qvimai thiudinassus theins; vairthai vilja theins, sve'in himina, jah ana airthai;

hlaif unsarana thana sinteinan gif uns himma daga; jah aflet uns thatei skulans sijaima svasve jah veis afletam thaim skulam unsaraim; jah ni briggais uns in fraistubnjai, ak lausei uns af thamma ubilin; unte theina ist thiudangardi, jah mahts, jah vulthus in aivins. Amen.

Here we see one of the lost stages of travel, whereby many of the words of our daily usage were carried from their far home in India, through Tartary, over the Caucasus, around the Black Sea, and so westward until they reach history. It is a curious circumstance that the two sounds of *th*, in English, are derived from the Gothic. The German race must once have used these sounds, and then have lost them. But they were carried by the Visigoths to Spain, and still belong to Icelandic, after having been dropped out of Swedish and Danish. We might almost say that the Gothic of Ulfilas is the point whence the elements which have become separated in English and German began to diverge; but there are one or two later fragments wherein they are still blended.

A language so finely developed as the Gothic must have had its literature. We may assume this as certain, even without evidence. Nevertheless, as in those buildings of the Middle Ages which are constructed out of the ruins of Roman and Grecian cities, we still see the ancient chisel-marks and fragments of carvings and inscriptions, so in the literature of the German language, after it took its distinct form, we constantly detect the earlier Gothic material. But we are unable to reconstruct the fragments. We only know that the

sixth and seventh centuries must have been rich in songs and warlike ballads, which kept alive the deeds of Theodoric and Odoaker, kings of Italy, and Attila, the Hun, and the heroes of Burgundy and Flanders who still survive in the "*Nibelungenlied.*" As Christianity extended its dominion, the influence of the priests was exerted to substitute sacred for secular literature. The Greek and Roman authors, moreover, constituted an aristocracy, beside which any productions of a language counted barbaric, must sink to the lowest plebeian level. What learning there was in those days, we may easily imagine, turned up its nose at the strains of the native minstrels.

The man who converted the pagan Saxons by the sword, who laid the first broad foundations of German nationality and German civilization, was the first to value these half-suppressed elements of a new literature. He is called Karl the Great in the history of his own race, but we know him better as Charlemagne. While in the interest of Christianity, he put down the old Teutonic religion with one hand and pushed back the Saracens with the other, he was far wiser than the Christian spirit of his day. He did not attempt to transfer the already crumbled culture of pagan Rome to the banks of the Rhine, but used it as a guide to a new, an independent German culture. His one mistake was that he confided the execution of his plans exclusively to the clergy, as the only educated class, instead

of creating a class of learned men outside the pale of the Church.

Charlemagne loved the German language, and was acquainted with its songs and ballads. He caused a complete collection of the latter to be made, and had them sung or recited at his court, rightly seeing in them the basis of a new literature. We are perhaps indebted to this circumstance for the reappearance of the ancient themes in the later epics; but the original collection is irrevocably lost. Ludwig the Pious undid, as far as it was possible, the great national work of his father. In his bigoted old age, he refused to hear the German songs which he was accustomed to recite in his youth, —and we can understand how immediately the clergy would take advantage of his prejudices, to suppress the growing national taste, and keep literature as well as religion in their own hands. The long strife between Germany and Rome, which has broken out afresh in our time, secretly existed then. Although some of the early German emperors virtually selected the popes, the Church was patient, and probably then anticipated the day when, at Canossa, two hundred and fifty years later, Gregory VII. would set his foot on a German emperor's neck.

The treaty of Verdun, in 843, between the grandsons of Charlemagne, was a fortunate event for Germany, if it could have been perpetual, for it dissolved the political connection with Italy. But death and life were tied

together by Otto I., a hundred years later, and the evil that followed has not been worked out of the race to this day. We have no record of any particular edict concerning the suppression of the collection of ballads made by order of Charlemagne; but the multiplication of copies must have ceased during the reign of his son, and those already in existence could hardly survive theological prejudice for three hundred years, until the Hohenstaufen emperors protected a new era of literature.

From the few fragments of the language which have been preserved, I shall quote a part of the oath of Charles the Bald, the grandson of Charlemagne, in 842, very nearly five hundred years later than the Gothic of Ulfilas. You will notice that both the German and Scandinavian elements have become more marked, while the English, or rather Anglo-Saxon character, has been diminished by separation:

In godes minna ind in thes christiânes folches ind unser bêdherô gehaltnissi, fon thesemo dage frammordes, sô fram sô mir got gewiczi indi mahd furgibit, sô haldih tesan mînan bruodher sôsô man mit rehtû sinan bruodher scal, in thiû thaz er mig sô sama duo, indi mit Ludheren in nohheiniu thing ne gegangu thê mînan willon, imo se scaden werdhên.

At this time there were several distinctly marked dialects, the chief of which, in Germany, were the High-German, which was again divided into Frankish and Suabian, and the Low-German, or Saxon, from which

the *Plattdeutsch* of to-day is descended. The separation of both the Anglo-Saxon and the Scandinavian branches had commenced before the time of Charlemagne, and the remains of their early literature are not generally included in that of Germany. The fragment of the poem of Beowulf, for instance, is given to our race by the German scholars, partly for philological reasons, and partly because it belongs to a different *Sagenkreis*, or legendary cycle. Had the heroic ballads of the sixth and seventh centuries been preserved, we might perhaps have been able to mark the exact point from which each of the two great modern languages moved in different directions; but we can only say that the earliest literary remains, which are specially and distinctly German, date from after the separation.

The earliest of these is known as the "*Hildebrandslied*"—the Song, or Lay of Hildebrand. Only a small part of it survives, and we owe its existence to a fortunate chance. It appears that two monks of the monastery of Fulda, who had perhaps originally been soldiers, filled up two or three blank pages of a theological manuscript by writing upon them what they remembered of a popular heroic poem. The manuscript is as old as the middle of the ninth century, and the poem was probably composed between 750 and 800, or nearly at the same time as the oldest Scandinavian Edda. The fragment is still preserved in the library at Cassel. It is written in the Low-German dialect, but

with High-German forms of construction, and is, therefore, much more difficult to read than the Oath of Charles the Bald. The story has a remarkable resemblance to that of Sohrab and Rustum, told by the Persian poet Firdusi in his "*Shah Nameh*," and retold in admirable English verse by Matthew Arnold. Hildebrand, one of the warriors of Theodoric the Goth, has been thirty years absent with his master, among the Huns, and now returns with him to his own kingdom. Hildebrand had there left behind him a wife and a young son. This son, by name Hadubrand, now a strong warrior, comes forth with his men to meet the strangers, and challenges his father to combat. Hildebrand recognizes his son, tells him his story, and offers him his golden bracelets. But Hadubrand answers that his father is dead, that sea-faring men brought the news of his death, that he believes Hildebrand to be a crafty Hun, and he will only accept the bracelets with the lance, sword against sword. Hildebrand finds it impossible to decline the defiance; lances are cast, swords are drawn, and the shields of both are hacked in pieces. Here the fragment breaks off; but the Song of Hildebrand, although not written, seems to have lived orally among the people, and seven hundred years later it was sung again by Kaspar von der Roen. The end is that Hadubrand is overcome, but not slain, by his father, and both return together to the wife and mother.

The "*Hildebrandslied*" is written in a rude alliterative

saga-measure,—that original form of verse from which our rhymed poetry is derived. This, in its turn, is undoubtedly the later modification of some much older form. The fact that classic poetry was read according to quantity, and the saga-measure according to accent, shows the complete independence of the early Gothic and German poetry of the influence of the Greek and the Roman. It is impossible to guess when either alliteration or rhyme originated; both are probably as old as well-developed human language; for children and savages always discover them and play with them. But the fact that alliteration appears equally in the oldest German, Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian, indicates that it must have been inherited by each equally from the Gothic; and thus it is perhaps as old a form of poetry as the Homeric hexameter. The ancient rule required that the accent not only fell on the important words, but two words in the first line, and one in the second, must commence with the same letter. The effect is that of a half-rhyme at the commencement and middle of a line, instead of a whole rhyme at the end. In fact, the early Norsemen and Germans called this measure the *Stabreim*, and the three alliterative words *Liedstäbe* (song-sticks), or bars, upon which the lines rested, very much as a melody is supported by bars, in music. This is the derivation of our word *stave*, which we still use to designate the verse of a song. To make the explanation clearer, I will quote two stanzas in the saga-

measure, from Lowell's poem of "The Voyage to Vinland":

"Weak was the Old World,
Wearily war-fenced;
Out of its ashes,
Strong as the morning,
Springeth the new.
Beauty of promise,
Promise of Beauty,
Safe in the silence
Sleep thou, till cometh
Light to thy lids!"

As we find the first written basis of the language in the Gothic Gospels of Ulfilas, so we find the first surviving relic of a native, autochthonous German literature in the Song of Hildebrand. Let us now examine what is left of it. I will first select the passage where Hadubrand, the son, speaks to Hildebrand, the father:

Hadubraht gimahalta
Hiltibrantes sunu:
" Dat sagêtun mî
ûserê liutî:
altê anti frôtê,
deâ êr hina wârun,
dat Hiltibrant hætti mîn fater;

ih heittu Hadubrant.
Forn her ôftar giweit,
flôh her Otachres nid,
hina miti Theotrihhe
enti sinerô deganô filu.
Her furlaet in lante
luttila sitten
prût in bûre,
barn unwahsan,
arbeolaosa."

So spake Hadubrand,
Son of Hildebrand:
" Said unto me
Some of our people,
Shrewd and old,
Gone hence already,
That Hildebrand was my father called,—
I am called Hadubrand.
Erewhile he eastward went,
Escaping from Odoaker,
Thither with Theodoric
And his many men of battle.
Here he left in the land,
Lorn and lonely,
Bride in bower,
Bairn ungrown,
Having no heritage."

I think we cannot help feeling both the simplicity, and the natural dignity, of these lines. The language is the plainest possible; there is not here, nor anywhere in the poem, an approach to metaphor; the situation is so thoroughly epic, that it requires no poetical adornment. After Hildebrand throws down his golden bracelets, and Hadubrand charges him with being a tricky old Hun, the latter says:

" Dat sagêtun mî	" This said unto me
sêolidantê	Sea-faring men,
westar ubar wentilsæo,	From over Midland-sea,
dat man wîc furnam:	That battle took him:
Tôt ist Hiltibrant,	Dead is Hildebrand,
Heribrantes suno!"	Son of Heribrand!"

Notice, now, how the poem continues:

Hiltibraht gimahalta,	Spake then Hildebrand,
Heribrantes suno:	Son of Heribrand:
" Wela gisihu ih	" Surely see I
in dinêm hrustim	From thine armor,
dat du habês hême	Hast at home here
hêrron gôten,	King that is kindly,
dat du noh bî desemo rîche	Wast not yet in his ranks
reccheo ni wurti."	Ranged as a war-man."

Then he continues, in a strain all the more tragic from its bareness:

" Welaga nu, waltant got!	" Well-a-day now, governing God!
wêwurt skihit!	Woe-worth shall happen!
ih wallôta sumarô	Summers full sixty,
enti wintrô sehstic,	And winters, I wander,
dâr man mih eô scerita	Ever called with the crowd

in folc sceotanterô,
sô man mir at bure ænîgeru
banun ni gifasta.
Nu scal mih suûsat
chind suertû hauwan,
bretôn mit sinû billjû
eddo ih imo ti banin werdan."

Of shooters of spears;
Nor in mine own stronghold
Delayed, as the dead.
Now shall the child of me
Smite me with sword,
Bite me with broad steel,
Or I be his slayer."

There is nothing more nobly simple and natural in Homer than this last passage. Without the least effort, by the commonest means, the poem here rises to the highest epic and tragic grandeur. The last lines of the fragment, where the fight commences, are not less fine:

Do lættun se œrist
askim scrîtan,
scarpên scûrim,
dat in dêm sciltim stônt.

(Then let they first the ash stride forth, with a sharp storming, so that it stood in the shields.)

The passages I have given amount to about one-third of what remains of the original poem.

Some scholars consider that the song of Hildebrand formed part of the collection made by order of Charlemagne. This is merely conjecture; but it is very possible that the lines I have quoted may have been recited at the court of that emperor.

The next work which has been preserved dates from near the middle of the ninth century. It is sometimes called the "*Old-Saxon Gospel Harmony*," and sometimes the "*Heliand*," an ancient form of the modern German

word *Heiland*, the Saviour. There seem to be some grounds for the tradition that it was written by a Saxon peasant, who was looked upon by the people as specially inspired for the purpose, during the reign of Ludwig the Pious, the son of Charlemagne. The object of the writer was undoubtedly to make the life and works of Christ, as related in the Gospels, known to the common people through the medium of their own language, and the alliterative poetic measure in which they had chanted to their own not yet forgotten deities. The priests, therefore, must have taken pains to substitute this Christian poem for the songs and ballads of the heroes, as a means of securing the faith of those tribes who, like the Saxons, had been converted by force. The poem is a remodelling of the Gospel narrative, rather than a translation; in style, manner and language it has an original character, and the figures of Christ and His disciples receive a new and warm and impressive life in its lines. Vilmar even goes so far as to say: "It is by far the most excellent, complete and lofty work which the Christian poetry of all races and all times has produced. Apart from its religious substance, it is one of the noblest poems ever created by the imaginative human mind, and in some passages and descriptions may be placed beside the strains of Homer. It is the only really Christian epic." Without accepting such an extravagant estimate, I am at least quite ready to admit that it contains a purer and more at-

tractive poetic element than the "Messiah" of Klopstock, or the religious poetry of the English language.

It is often noticed, by readers as well as critics, that what is called *religious* poetry rarely possesses any striking literary value; and the same may be said of *political* poetry. There is here, I think, simply a confusion of terms. If we substitute the adjectives *doctrinal* and *partisan* for "religious" and "political," the cause of the failure is evident. Literature lives and flourishes in the freest atmosphere of spiritual and political aspiration, but it begins to perish when the attempt is made to narrowly define and limit and circumscribe those passions of the human soul. The old Saxon "*Heliand*" only tells the story of Christ's life. Its writer knew the people he was addressing, and he chose the simplest way to reach their imagination and emotions. The Hebrew air which seems to blow from the Old Testament over the New, is not felt in his poem: the characters and situations, no less than the speech, are Saxon. We might almost fancy that Christ is the beautiful god of the Scandinavians, the white Balder, in a more perfect form. I shall quote a passage where the disciples questioned him concerning the last day, the end of the world: you will notice that it is a paraphrase of the 24th chapter of Matthew:

Tho gengun imo is iungaron to,	Then went His disciples Him unto,
fragodon ina so stillo:	And questioned Him secretly:

"Hus langa scal standen noh," quandun sie,
"thius werold an wunniun,
er than that giwand kume,
that the lasto dag
liohtes skine
thurh wolkanskion?
eftho hvan is eft thin wan kuman
an thenne middilgard,
mankunni
te adomienne
dodun endi quikun?
Fro min, the godo,
us is thes firwit mikil
waldandeo Krist,
hvan that giwerden sculi!"
Tho im andwordi
alowaldo Krist
godlic fargaf,
them gumun selbo.
"That habad so bidernid," quad he,
"himilrikies fader,
waldand thesaro weroldes,
so that witen ni mag
enig mannisc barn,
hvan thiu marie tid
giwirdid an thesaru weroldi.
Ne il ok te waran ni kunnun
godes engilos,
thie for imo geginwarde
simlun sindun.
Sie it ok giseggian ni mugun
te waran mid iro wordun,
hvan that giwerden sculi,
that he willie an thesan middilgard,
mahtig drohtin,

"How long shall stand yet," quoth they,
"This world so winsome,
Ere then the end come,
And the last day's light
Shine through the closing
Clouds of the firmament?
When meanest thou to come
To this middle mansion,
Unto mankind,
To judge and doom
The quick and dead?
Lord mine, the loving,
Deep our desire is,
All-governing Christ,
To know when it cometh!"
Answered them thereupon
All-governing Christ,
Godlike gave to them,
Even themselves, the men.
"So hath He hidden it," quoth he,
"Heaven's high Father,
Ruling the earth-realm,
So that know it may none
Of the children of men
When that wonderful day
Dawns on the world.
Nor also verily know it
God's very angels,
Who present before Him
Perpetually wait.
Neither dare they declare it,
With truth of willing word-speech,
When it shall come,
That He, in this middle mansion,
Living Lord,

firino fandon.
Fader wet it eno,
helag fan himile;
elcur is il biholen allun,
quikun endi dodun,
hvan il kumi werdad.
Ik mag in thoh gitellien,
hvilic er tecan bivoran
giwerdad wunderlic,
er he an these werold kume
an themu marcon daga.
That wirdid er an the no manon skin,
jac an theru sunnun so same:
gisverkad siu bethiu,

mit finistre werdad bifangan;

fallad sterron,
hvit hebentungal,
endi hrisid erde,
bivod thins brede werold.
Wirdid sulikaro bokno filu:
grimmid the groto seo,
wirkid thie gebenes strom
egison mit is udhiun
erdbuandiun.
than thorrot thiu thiod
thurh that gethving mikil,
folc thurh thea forhta:
than nis fridu hvergin;
ac wirdid wig so maneg
obar these werold alla
hetili afhaben;
endi heri ledid
kunni obar odar."

Sin shall sentence.
Knoweth it the Father only,
Holy One from heaven;
Else is it darkened from all,
Both the quick and the dead.

Yet will I truly tell you,
Signs to be seen beforehand,
Wondrous to witness,
Or ever He weighs the world
On the famous day of doom.
The moon shall make it manifest,
Yea, and the sun the same:
Clearness of them shall be clouded
Deeply, and drenched in darkness:
Fall shall the star-fires,
White tongues of heaven,
Earth wofully tremble,
The wide world shiver.
Many shall be such marvels:
Grimly shall the great sea
Roar with his waves in wrath,
And the deep become a dread
To the Earth-dwellers.
Pine then shall the people,
Torn by the tribulation,
Multitudes fall in their fear;
For peace shall perish,
And wars so murderous,
Many and mighty,
Waste the world."

I would especially call attention, in this passage, to the greater brevity and strength of expression, the sim-

pler construction of the language, as compared with modern German. Gervinus, however, very correctly remarks that the external form of a language is no sure indication of the genius of the people who speak it: we must measure the importance of the thoughts expressed. The greatest richness, power and flexibility avail but little, if the race is intellectually impoverished, or if its intellectual growth is forcibly suppressed. While we admire this wonderful work of a Saxon peasant—the literary brother of Cædmon, our earliest Anglo-Saxon singer, after Beowulf—we must remember that his subject, alone, has saved his poem. Had he written of Theodoric or Siegfried, he would have been frowned upon, if not silenced, by the emperor and the clergy. Indeed, the success of the "*Heliand*" led to the production of a rival poem, by Otfried, a Benedictine monk, who possessed the learning of the monasteries of Fulda and St. Gall, and made the classic authors his models, although he wrote in German. In the dearth of literary remains from that age, his work is interesting and valuable. It shows the accomplished scholar, as the "*Heliand*" shows the unlettered, but genuine poet. Otfried's poem is written in High-German, and in regular, rhymed stanzas, so that it marks the transition from the ancient to the modern form of poetry. Rhyme already existed, and it is also nearly certain that the songs of the people were occasionally divided into verses of equal length, so that Otfried is entitled to no merit for the mere form

of his work. He manifests both skill and scholarship, but he is cold, mechanical and studied. I find that his lines, although nearer German, are more difficult to read than those of the "*Heliand.*" I will quote the corresponding passage, where the disciples question Christ concerning the end of the world, to show the difference between the two. Otfried's poem was finished in the year 868, about thirty years after the other.

Er sáz sid thémo gánge
in themo óliberge;
frágetun sie nan súntar—
sie wás es filu wúntar:

"Ságe uns, meistar, thánne
wío thiu zít gigange,

zéichan wio thu quéman scalt,

ioh wio thiu wórolt ouh zigát?"

"Góumet," quad ér, "thero dáto,
ioh weset gláwe, thrato,
thaz iu ni dáron in fára
thie mánagon lúginara.
"Yrwéhsit íamarlichaz thing
úbar thesan wórolt ring,
in hungere int in súhti
in wénegeru flúhti!"

After this walk, He set
Himself on Olivet;
Him closely did they question,
Great marvel then possessed them.

"Declare us, Master, now,
When comes the time, and how,

What signs shalt thou, ere coming, send,

And how the world shall find its end?"

"These things consider," said He;
"Be prudent, wise, and ready
And 'gainst the danger 'ware ye
Of liars that would ensnare ye.
"Great misery shall be hurled
Over all the ring of the world,
In plague and hunger breaking,
In flying and forsaking!"

Here I omit several stanzas, where the versions do not agree, and give three more which nearly correspond in language with the "*Heliand*":

"Duit máno ioh thiu sunna
mit fínstere únwunna,

"The sun and moon shall frown
In woe of darkness down,

ioh fállent ouh thie stérron	And fall shall every star
in érda filu férron.	On earth, both near and far.
"Sih, weinot thanne thuruh thia quíst	"Behold this trouble deep
al thaz hiar in érdu ist,	Shall make all earth to weep;
thúruh thio selbum grúnni	For these same troubles sent,
al thiz wórolt kunni.	All sons of men lament.
"So séhent se mit githuínge	"They with amaze unending,
quéman thara zi thínge	To judgment then descending
fon wólkonon hérasun	Shall see, through the cloudy span,
then selbon ménnisgen sun!"	The self-same Son of Man!"

This will suffice to show the difference in dialect and character between the two poems. It is a curious circumstance that both the Saxon peasant and the monk Otfried, in their rival Gospel Harmonies, studiously avoid every reference to Jewish history or customs: they even omit the name of Jerusalem. We have no means of ascertaining the relative popularity of the two poems; but this must have partly depended on the dialect in which they were written. Toward the end of the ninth century, short hymns and religious poems of a narrative character became frequent. Only four or five, which are rather doggrel than poetry, have come down to us.

One more relic of the earliest German literature, and only one, remains to be mentioned. This is the "*Ludwigslied*," which celebrates the victory of Ludwig III. over the Normans, at Saulcourt, in the year 881. It was written by Hucbald, a learned monk, soon after the battle, and the original manuscript, in Hucbald's own

hand, is still in existence. It was discovered at Valenciennes in France. There are two peculiarities about this song: it is the first secular work in German, by a clerical author; and, secondly, it is not a *Lied*, or song wherein the chief interest belongs to the words, the musical accompaniment being of secondary importance, but a *Leich*, or song written especially for music, wherein the melody partly determines beforehand what words shall be used. Thus it resembles the text of an opera melody, as contrasted with the *Lieder*, or with the songs of Burns. In such airs as *casta diva*, or *suoni la tromba*, the words are simply a carpet thrown down, over which the music walks triumphant; but when the true *Volkslied*, or song of the people, appears, the melody comes to it, and lives with it as a loving and faithful handmaid.

The language of the "*Hildebrandslied*" and the "*Ludwigslied*" shows the contrast between the natural poetic speech, and that which springs only from culture. The former is as simple as the speech of a child; the characters are placed before us without explanation, we hear them speak and see them act, and the story is told; but the monk Hucbald's song of victory begins with a description of Ludwig as a servant of God, and especially recommended to His favor. Trial and probation are sent to him; malice, falsehood, and treachery surround him. Then, when the trouble of his people from the invasion of the Normans becomes great, God

speaks to him in person, commissioning him to promise help and comfort, and assuring him of victory in advance. The honest old monk does not see that Ludwig ceases to be heroic in proportion as he becomes sanctified: any general will lead his troops into battle when he foreknows his own success.

I will quote only the description of the battle, of which we have but twenty lines, part of the manuscript being lost. This is the most spirited and picturesque portion of the poem:

Thô nam her skild indi sper,
ellianlicho reit her,
wold er wâr errahchôn
sina widarsahchon.
Thô ni was iz buro lang,
fand her thia Northman;
Gode lob sagêda;
her sihit, thes her gerêda.
Ther kuning reit kuono,
sang lioth frônô,
joh allê saman sungun:
"Kyrrie leison!"
Sang was gisungan,
wîg was bigunnan;
bluot skein in wangôn,
spilôdun ther Vrankôn.
Thar vaht thegenô gelîh,
nichein sô sô Hludgwîg;
snel indi kuoni,
thaz was imo gekunni.
Suman thuruh skluog her,
suman thuruh stah her;
. . . . . .

Then took he spear and shield,
Mightily rode to the field;
Ready he was, and merry,
To test his adversary.
Little time went round
Ere he the Normans found:
"God be praised!" he panted:
He saw what he wanted.
The king rode knightly:
He sang a song lightly,
And all sang together:
"*Kyrie eleison!*"
Ceased the song's delighting,
Begun was the fighting:
Blood in cheeks shone clearly,
Fought the Franks so cheerly.
Ludwig, hero-like,
Struck as none could strike,
With speed, and force, and spirit:
Such did he inherit.
One he battered dead,
Another stabbed and sped,
. . . . . .

Here the description breaks off suddenly, and the remainder of the manuscript is a thanksgiving of Ludwig and his Franks after the battle.

This earliest period of German literature, commencing with the first traces of the written language, covers a space of about eight hundred years. The scholars are agreed in fixing, as the period of its termination, the accession of the Hohenstaufens to the German imperial throne, in 1138. But from the production of the "*Ludwigslied*" to this latter date, two centuries and a half intervene. It is surprising that all the records which remain to us from that long period possess scarcely any literary importance. An apparent desert separates the old from the mediæval realm. Yet the whole country, during this time — especially under the reign of the Ottos — was growing in industry, in civil order, in wealth, security and intelligence. We shall find, indeed, if we carefully study history, that there was a literature, but of an imitative, artificial character, written in Latin, and not in German. Otto I., who began to reign in 936, added Italy again to the Empire, after a separation of nearly a hundred years, and the power of the Church began to increase. He studied the classics, his son, Otto II., married a Grecian princess, with whom Byzantine art and architecture came to Germany, and Otto III. spoke Greek almost as well as German. Besides, Arianism had been suppressed, the last vestiges of the old Teutonic faith had disappeared, and the

priests, released from the labor of conversion, could devote much of their time to other than theological studies. Europe was covered with stately and wealthy monasteries, and some of them—as St. Gaul, Fulda, Corvey, and Hildesheim—became famous seats of learning. In addition to the legends of saints, and the chronicles of the Church, which were now written in great numbers, the picturesque episodes of early German history were taken up, and made the subject of Latin epics, some of which still exist, either complete or in fragments. I do not consider, however, that these works properly belong to German literature; their interest is simply historical.

It is reasonable to suppose, nevertheless, that the taste of the people for those earlier stores of poetry from which the "*Niebelungenlied*" and "*Reynard the Fox*" were afterwards created, was not suppressed, although their continued production was discouraged in every way. But, during these two hundred and fifty years, the people were passing through that change of habits and relations to one another which followed their change of faith. It was a period of ferment and transition, but of a material rather than an intellectual character, until the close of the eleventh century when the Crusades commenced. The native German element of poetry lay dormant, but it was not dead. Vilmar very justly says: "Even as the strength and activity of the soul is not extinguished in sleep, so we dare not affirm this of the

German people during the almost dumb and barren tenth, eleventh, and first half of the twelfth, centuries. As in dreams were preserved, as in the faltering, half-conscious speech of dreams were sung, the old heroic ballads of Siegfried and Theodoric, of Chrimhild and Hagen, of Walther and Attila."

I have given no specimens of the prose literature of Germany during the eight centuries which I have briefly reviewed, for the simple reason that there is none. Nearly all chronicles or documents were written in Latin, and the German author, of course, preferred to use a language which his fellow-authors throughout Europe could read without translation. Besides, in the civilization of the races, poetry is the first form of literature, as sculpture is the first form of art. Men demand in the beginning, not ideas nor illusive copies of realities, but a shape, palpable to the eye or the ear, and thus the most perfect art is the earliest born. Indeed, we might say, that the primitive poetry of Germany, with its rude, short, strong lines, falling like the blows of a hammer, and dinting the memory with their alliterative words, helped to make the popular mind ductile, and softer for the reception of ideas. The literature of Greece, France, Scandinavia and England was equally built on a basis of poetry.

As I said in the commencement, it is difficult to describe the intellectual growth of a race during those remote ages, without the illustration of its history.

Yet we have the relationship of blood and character to assist us, and I rely somewhat on those intellectual instincts which have come down to us from the Goths and Saxons, to fill up some of my own omissions. To me, the lines of the "*Heliand*" and "*Hildebrandslied*"—even the Gothic words of Ulfilas—have something familiar and home-like about them. Without making any special study of the language, the meaning gradually comes of itself, like something which has been once learned and then forgotten. In the age of the Minnesingers and the courtly epics, to which we now turn, we shall find fancy and feeling and elegant versification, but nothing more artlessly simple, more vigorous or noble, than the songs of the earliest days.

II.

THE MINNESINGERS.

In spite of Buckle and the other writers of his school, all the phenomena of human civilization cannot yet be so arranged and classified that we are able to find their inevitable causes. Wealth may follow commerce, industry and order may follow peace and just government; but the literature and the art of a people arise through a combination of influences, which we cannot always trace to their sources. But we may at least discover the circumstances and conditions which encourage or depress their growth. When a period of creative activity has commenced, we can then partly account for its character. In other words, no one can explain how that mysterious quality which we call genius is planted in the spirit of man; but, after it has been so planted, and begins to select the material for its work, its operation is modified according to general intellectual laws, the effect of which upon it may be studied.

There are three circumstances in the history of Germany, which did not produce the famous company of authors in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but which greatly favored their productiveness, and wonder-

fully helped the literary development of the entire German people. These circumstances are in chronological order—first, the Crusades; second, the accession of the Hohenstaufens to the imperial throne; and third, the rise of Provençal literature, the first native growth from any of the Romanic languages. These were contemporary events; for, although the first crusaders captured Jerusalem in 1099, the Emperor Conrad III., the first Hohenstaufen, was crowned in 1138, and took part in the second crusade in 1147. After the recapture of Jerusalem by Saladin in 1187, Barbarossa led the third crusade in 1189—the same in which Philip Augustus of France and Richard the Lion-heart were commanders. Finally, Frederick II., the Hohenstaufen, and the greatest German emperor since Charlemagne, undertook the fifth crusade in 1228. The Hohenstaufen line ceased with the death of Conrad II. in 1254.

Now, if we turn to Provençal history, we shall find that the poetry of the Troubadours was developed from the rude popular song and ballad into that elegance and melodious form which made it the courtly minstrelsy of France and Italy, between the years 1090 and 1140, and that its period of achievement lasted until the year 1250, so that the golden era of Provençal literature exactly corresponded with the reign of the Hohenstaufen line. Rudel, whose romantic love for the Princess of Tripoli has inspired so many later ballads, was a contemporary of Diethmar von Aist, one of the

first Minnesingers; and Bertrand de Born, in whose lines we hear the blast of the trumpet and the clash of swords, was a contemporary of Walther von der Vogelweide, who sang of birds and the blossoms of May. Some of the German scholars deny that the troubadours contributed toward the revival of poetry by the Minnesingers, for the reason that the former sang of battles and heroic deeds, while the latter sang of love and sorrow and the influence of Nature. This distinction is correctly drawn: the Minnesingers were not imitators, but nevertheless they did owe their immediate popularity in Germany, and the encouragement accorded to them by the ruling princes, to the fashion which was first set by the Courts of Aix, Toulouse and Arragon. In fact, William, Count of Poitiers, was one of the earliest troubadours, and three kings of Arragon are named in the list of minstrels. Then, as in Schiller's poem, "The Might of Song," the poet sat beside the monarch, if he did not happen to be a monarch himself.

Turning to the history of the house of Hohenstaufen, we find that although six emperors of that house reigned from 1138 to 1254, a period of one hundred and sixteen years, the character and importance of the Hohenstaufen rule is due to two men, Frederick Barbarossa, who reigned thirty-eight years, and his grandson, Frederick II., who reigned thirty-six years. Both of them were men of culture and refined literary taste, and Frederick II. himself wrote poems in the Arabic

and Provençal languages. Even the boy Conradin, the last of the line, who was executed by Charles of Anjou in 1268, left two German poems behind him. Both Barbarossa and Frederick II. distinguished themselves by a bold and determined resistance to the growing power of the Popes. They were both called "heretics" by the clergy; Frederick II. was excommunicated, his sudden death was attributed to poison, and it was the influence of Rome which exterminated his race within twenty years after his death; yet, during the century of the Hohenstaufens, Germany was comparatively free from the nightmare of priestly rule. Barbarossa became the symbol of national sentiment and national unity among the people: Frederick II. laid the foundation for that middle class, between the nobles and the peasants, which is the present strength of every nation of Europe; and he began unconsciously to prepare the way for Luther, three hundred years before the Reformer's birth. They were great political architects, who builded broader and stronger than they knew. From the Rhone to Mount Tabor and the Sea of Galilee, from the Baltic to the gardens of Sicily, their lives were battles and marches; they sat on portable thrones, and their palaces were tents.

Although Europe paid five million lives for a ninety years' occupation of Jerusalem, and a two hundred years' possession of the coast of Palestine, her real gain was worth the sacrifice. The nations drew new

virtues and new graces of character from the Crusades. Their people came out of seclusion into a grand continental society; all minor interests were lost in the two great inspirations—war and religion; narrow prejudices were swept away, ignorance corrected, knowledge exchanged, and Christian courtesy began to take the place of barbaric manners. When, in some Phrygian forest, or some valley of Taurus or Lebanon, the Provençal sat beside the Saxon, the Norman beside the Suabian, and the lively strains of the *jongleur* alternated with some grave old Teutonic ballad in the saga-measure, there was already that stimulus of emulation which is the first condition of literary growth. The three influences which I have mentioned were blended together in their operation on the German people—the education of the Crusades, the courtly fashion of song, with the elegant Provençal models, and finally the intelligence and taste of the rulers, combined with their defiance of the authority of Rome.

In regard to this latter point, I must add a word of explanation. I should not venture to say that the intellectual development of an individual or a race is very seriously affected by the character of his or its religious faith. Barbarossa, Frederick II., Walther von der Vogelweide, Wolfram von Eschenbach, were Catholics, as were Dante and Tasso. But I do assert, with the positiveness of profoundest belief, that no other agency in the history of man has so injuriously

interfered with his growth in knowledge as the ecclesiastical power of any faith which seeks to bring under its exclusive control and government all forms of intellectual growth. In this country, where we have never had, and never can have, a union of Church and State, it is difficult for us to understand the spiritual tyranny which any form of religious belief will always assume when it has the power. The Church of Rome, in the Middle Ages, was despotic, because all civilized Christendom belonged to it; but any earlier or later variety of faith would, under the same circumstances, have assumed the same character. Tolerance is always an acquired, not a natural virtue. In the development of German Literature, the religious element every now and then asserts itself, and must be mentioned. I wish, therefore, to treat it simply as an inevitable fact, without prejudice or partisan views.

For two hundred and fifty years, as we have seen, the creative spirit of literature in Germany had been sunk in a sleep like death; but it now began to revive. It meets us, at the start, in a new character, and is the expression of a new spirit. The stages of transition between the "*Hildebrandslied*," the "*Heliand*," the rhymed couplets of Otfried and Hucbald and the smooth, elaborate stanzas of the Minnesingers, have been lost. The new race of minstrels began by borrowing form and melody from the troubadours; but this was all they borrowed. They belonged to an im-

pressible, emotional race, in whom the elements of song always existed, and in whom the joy of expressing and communicating fancy and feeling to others was always strong. Their language had so changed in the meantime that it is now called the Mediæval High-German by scholars, to distinguish it from the Old High-German of Charlemagne's time. The first attempts at lyrical poetry, in the twelfth century, show the stiff joints of a speech which is not accustomed to trip in musical measures; but it very soon became flexible and warm, and learned to follow the moods of its masters.

The age that now commences was especially one of epic poetry, and quite as remarkable in this respect as was the age of Elizabeth for English dramatic poetry. The Minnesingers did not precede the epic poets, but were contemporaneous with them, and both of the titles may be applied with equal justice to several famous authors. I take the lighter strains first, because they spring more directly from the character of the age, and are a part of that minstrelsy which you will meet in English history, in the persons of Taillefer and Blondel and Richard of the Lion-Heart. In fact, the song of love or sorrow was as common throughout Europe as the red-cross on the left shoulder of the Crusader. These songs were remembered and sung by thousands who were unable to hear or recite the epic poems, and thus the people were taught to enjoy brief lyrics of action or feeling. The lyrical poetry of every modern language

grew from this basis, and our chief wonder, in contrasting the lays of the troubadours with those of this day, must be that the improvement, so far as concerns the graces of rhythmical form, has been so slight between that time and this.

We have the names and many of the poems of a large number of the Minnesingers—quite as many, indeed, as is necessary; but our knowledge of the authors is generally defective, and an exact chronological arrangement of them cannot be made. One of the earliest is Diethmar von Aist, and I quote his little song of the "Falcon," because its subject is simple and unaffected, while the language shows that rhyme is still an unaccustomed restraint.

Ez stuont ein vrouwe aleine
unt warte uber heide,
unt warte ihr liebes,
sô gesach sie valken vliegen.
" Sô wol dir, valke, daz du bist!
Dû vliugest, swar dir lieb ist;
dû erkiusest dir in dem walde
einen boum, der dir gevalle.
Alsô hân onch ih getân:
ih erkôs mir selben einen man
den erwehlten mîniu ougen;
daz nîdent schône vrouwen.
O wê, wan lânt si mir mîn liep?

jo engerte ich ir dekeines trûtes
niet!"
Sô wol dir, sumerwunne!
Daz gevogel sanc ist gesunde,
alse ist der linden ir loup.

There stood alone a lady
And waited on the moorland,
And waited for her lover,
And saw the falcon flying.
" Ah, happy falcon that thou art!
Thou fliest where thou pleasest;
Thou choosest from the forest
The tree which best thou lovest,
And thus have I done also:
I chose a man to be mine own,
In mine eyes the one elected,
And envied am by fairest dames.
Alas, why will they not leave
my love?
For none of theirs I ever hankered."
Fair art thou, joy of summer!
The song of birds is wholesome
As are its leaves unto the linden.

I must pass over many names—Friedrich von Hausen, the brave knight who fell in Asia Minor, Heinrich von Veldeck, Hartmann von Aue, and other noble minstrels —only pausing to quote this one verse of Heinrich von Morungen:

Ez ist site der nahtegal, swan si ir liet volendet, sô geswîget sie; Dur daz volge ab ich der swal, diu durch liebe, noch durch leide ir singen nie verlie.	'Tis the way of the nightingale, That when her song is finished she sings no more; But the swallow as mate I hail, Who neither for love nor woe, ceases her strain to pour.

Reimar the Old is another who tempts me with the increasing sweetness of his lines; but I must also pass him by to reach the fairest and most attractive name among the Minnesingers—Walther von der Vogelweide. Where or when he was born, we do not know: his youth was spent in Austria, at the court of Duke Frederick. At the close of the twelfth century we find him with Philip of Hohenstaufen, then with Otto of Wittelsbach, defying Pope Innocent III. in bold verses, when the Pope excommunicated the Emperor; and, finally, following Frederick II. to Palestine, scourging priests and monks with his satire, openly scoffing at the claims of the Papal power, and, as a writer of his time charges, "turning thousands from their duty to Rome." He was ennobled by Frederick II. and presented with an estate near Würzburg. He was buried in the cathedral of that city, leaving a sum of money to the monastery to buy corn

for the birds which were fed out of four hollow spaces cut in the top-slab of his tombstone. His will was carried out for several hundred years, and the tombstone, with the hollows for the *Vogelweide*, still exists.

In his youth, Walther von der Vogelweide was poor. He began life as a *jongleur*, a traveling minstrel, riding from castle to castle, and singing his songs to lords and ladies, to the accompaniment of his violin. Even after he reached the life of courts and became the minstrel of emperors, his circumstances do not seem to have improved. Some touching verses still exist, wherein he begs Frederick II. to grant him a home which he may call his own. "Have pity," he says, "that I am left so poor, with all my rich art. If I could once warm myself at my own hearth, how would I then sing of the birds and of flowers and of love!" He adds that he is tired of the title of "guest"—if he can only be "host," instead of "guest," he will ask no more. It is pleasant to know that Frederick was moved by this appeal, and gave the weary old poet a home.

In Walther's songs, we find the nature of the born poet enforcing its own expression. The imperfect German of his day becomes fluent and musical in his verses; but the truer test of his quality is that we soon cease to think of the language, quaint and strange as it appears, and are brought face to face, and heart to heart, with the minstrel himself. More than any other poet of the Middle Ages, he seems to us modern in feeling and in

style. He was one of the very first, not merely to describe Nature and rural life, but to express a sweet and artless delight in her manifold aspects. After him, Chaucer, then Shakespeare, with a long interval between, Cowper and Wordsworth, and, among us, Longfellow, Bryant and Whittier, have chanted the beauty of the external world; but, with all their higher graces of art, none of them can so immediately set us in the midst of May-time, blossoms and bird-songs, by a simple, child-like line, as Walther von der Vogelweide.

Here is a little song of his, called "*Maienwonne*" (the Bliss of May):

Muget ir schouwen, waz dem meien
wunders ist beschert?
Seht an, pfaffen, seht an, leien,
wie daz allez vert!
Grôz ist sîn gewalt;
ine weiz, ob er zouber künne:
swar er vert mit sîner wünne,
dân îs niemen alt.

Wol dir, meie, wie dû scheidest
allez âne haz!
Wie wol dû dié boume kleidest
und die heide baz!
Diu hât varwe mê.
"Dû bist kurzer, ich bin langer!"
alsô stritents ûf dem anger
bluomen unde klê.

Would you see how May to May-men
Bringeth marvels new;
Priests, behold!—behold it laymen,
What his might can do!
He is uncontrolled:
I know not if magic is it;
When his joys the world revisit,
Then is no one old.

Happy May, thy spell divideth
All, but not in hate!
Every tree in leafage hideth,
Nor the moorlands wait.
Colors fall in showers:
"I am long and thou art short,"
Thus in fields they strive and sport,
Clover, grass and flowers.

Rôter mund, wie dû dich swachest!
Lâ dîn lachen sîn!
Sham dich, daz dû mich an lachest
nâch dem schaden mîn.
Ist daz wol getân?
Owê sô verlorner stunde!

Sol von minneclîchem munde
solch unminne ergân?

Rosy mouth, why thus degrade thee,
Let thy laughter be!
Shame of scorn shall not evade thee,
After wounding me.
Doest thou kindly so?
Ah, lost hours that we are proving,

When from lips that seem so loving
Such unlove should flow!

Although this song has the character of a *Leich*, in suggesting music, the language is nowhere bent to adapt itself to the rhythm. Form and substance melodiously embrace each other: the stanza shows that the author has carefully studied rhythmical effect, yet his feeling fills it so evenly that the measure seems as unstudied as the song of a bird. The alliteration of the saga is also retained, but so skillfully, so delicately subordinate to the expression of joy in the May-time, that we do not immediately perceive it.

Here is another *minne*-song, remarkable for being written in the dactylic measure:

Wól mich der stúnde, daz ích sie erkande,
diu mir den lîp und den muot hât betwungen,
sît deich die sinne sô gar an sie wande,
der si mich hât mit ir güete verdrungen!

Happy the moment when first I beheld her,
Conquering body and soul with her beauty;
Since when my service the more hath compelled her
Still with her kindness to fetter my duty,

daz ich gescheiden von ir niht enkan,
daz hât ir schoene und ir güette gemachet
und ír rôter múnd, der sô lieplîchen lachet.

So that from her I can never more part.
This from her goodness and grace, and thereafter
Her roseate mouth, with the charm of its laughter.

Ich hân den múot und die sínne gewendet
an die vil reinen, die lieben, die guoten:
dáz müez' uns béiden wol werden volendet
swes ich getar an ir hulde gemuoten.
swaz ich ie freuden zer werlde gewan,
daz hât ir schoene und ir güete gemachet
und ír rôter múnt, der sô lieplîchen lachet.

Spirit and senses and thought I have given
Unto the best and the purest and dearest;
Now must the bliss be complete, as in heaven,
Since I have dared to desire to be nearest.
If the world's blisses were dear to my heart,
'Twas from her goodness and grace, and thereafter
Her roseate mouth, with the charm of its laughter.

I find in these little madrigals of Walther von der Vogelweide, the same grace and sweetness and willful play of fancy, as in those of Herrick and Carew. His sentiment for women is of the most refined and knightly character; and it is remarkable how the fine enthusiasm of his nature breaks out as fresh and ardent as ever, whenever he mentions love or the spring-time. Before turning to his didactic and satirical strains, I must quote three more stanzas, in illustration of this delightful quality. The first is from his poem of "The Glorious Dame"—"*Die Herrliche Frau.*"

Got hâte ir wengel hôhen fliz :
er streich sô tiure varwe dar,

sô reine rôt, sô reine wîz,

hie roeseloht, dort liljenvar.
Ob ich'z vor sünden tar gesagen,
sô saehe ich s'iemer gerner an

dan himel oder himelwagen.
Owê waz lobe ich tumber man ?
mach' ich sie mir ze hêr,
vil lihte wirt mîns mundes lop
mîns herzen sêr.

God was so careful of her cheeks;
He spread such precious colors there,
That pure and perfect, either speaks,
Here rosy-red, there lily-fair.
Not meaning sin, will I declare
That I more fain on her would gaze
Than on the sky or Starry Bear.
Ah, foolish me, what is't I praise ?
If I, too fond, exalt her so,
How soon the lip's delight becomes the bosom's woe.

Now take the opening stanzas of his song—"Spring and Women," which I quote on account of its bright, sunny character :

Sô die bluomen ûz dem grase dringent,
same si lachen gegen der spileden sunnen,
in einem meien an dem morgen fruo,
und die kleinen vogellin wol singent
in ir besten wîse die sie kunnen,

waz wünne mac sich dâ genôzen zuo ?
ez ist wol halb ein himelrîche.
Suln wir sprechen, waz sich deme gelîche,
sô sâge ich, waz mir dicke baz
in mînen ougen hât getân und taete ouch noch, gesaehe ich daz.

When the blossoms from the grass are springing,
As they laughed to meet the sparkling sun,
Early on some lovely morn of May,
And all the small birds on the boughs are singing
Best of music, finished and again begun,

What other equal rapture can we pray ?
It is already half of heaven.
But should we guess what other might be given,
So I declare, that, which in my sight,
Still better seems, and still would seem, had I the same delight.

Swâ ein edeliu schoene frouwe reine
wol gekleidet unde wol gebunden
durch kurzewîle zuo vil liuten gât,
hovelichen hôchgemuot, niht eine,
umbe sehende ein wênic under stunden:
alsam der sunne gegen den sternen stât:
der meie bringe uns al sîn wunder,
waz ist dâ sô wünneclîches under
als ir vil minneclîcher lip?
wir lâzen alle bluomen stân und kapfen an daz werde wîp.

When a noble dame of purest beauty
Well attired, with even garnished tresses,
Unto all, in social habit, goes,
Finely gracious, yet subdued to duty,
Whose impartial glance her state expresses,
As on stars the sun his radiance throws!
Then let May his bliss renew us:
What is there so blissful to us
As her lips of love to see?
We gaze upon the noble dame, and let the blossoms be.

We possess nearly two hundred of the poems and songs of Walther von der Vogelweide. Some of them are brief single verses, which chronicle some event of his life, or his individual relation to the times in which he lived; yet, slight as they are, they are characterized by a roundness, a completeness, an elegance, which show the master's hand. I should like to quote some stanzas of his poem "In the Promised Land," apparently written in Palestine; but my space is so brief that I prefer selecting, as more characteristic of the Hohenstaufen period, his defiance of Pope Innocent III., written after the latter had excommunicated the Emperor Otto. He commenced by comparing him to Pope Syl-

vester II., whose former name was Gerbert, who had the common reputation of being a magician, and was believed by the people to have been carried off by the Devil. Walther says:

Der stuol ze Rôme ist allerêrst berihtet rehte
âls hie vor bî einem zouberaere Gêrbrréhte.
Der gap ze valle niwet wan sîn eines leben:
sô wil sich dirre und al die kristenheit ze valle geben.
Wan rüefent alle zungen hin ze himele wâfen
und frâgent got, wie lange er welle slâfen?
Sie widerwürkent sîniu were und velschent sîniu wort:
sîn kameraere stilt im sînen himelhort,
sîn süener roubet hie und mordet dort,
sîn hirte ist z'einem wolve im worden under sînen schâfen.

The chair at Rome is now properly filled, as it was formerly by the magician Gerbert. He plunged into ruin only his own one soul: the present one will ruin himself and all Christendom. Why do not all tongues cry to heaven, and ask God how long He will quietly look on? They oppose His works, and counterfeit His words: the Pope's treasurers steal from God's heavenly hoard: his judges rob here, and murder there, and God's shepherd has become a wolf among His sheep.

Here is another, even stronger, provoked by the simony, which was then prevalent in the Church, and the sale of absolutions which, three hundred years later, gave Luther such a weapon against Rome:

Ir bischov' unde ir edelen pfaffen, ir sît verleitet.
Séht wie iuch der bâbest mit des tievels stricken seitet!
Saget ir uns, daz er sant Pêters slüzzel habe,
sô saget, war umbe er sîne lêre von den buochen schabe?
Daz man gotes gâbe iht koufe oder verkoufe,
daz wart uns verboten bî der toufe.

Nû lêre êt'z in sîn swarzez buoch, daz ime der hellemôr
hât gegeben, und ûz im lese êt sîniu rôr,
Ir kardenaele, ir decket iuwern kôr:
ûnser alter frône der stêt undr einer übelen troufe.

Ye bishops and ye noble priests, you are misled. See how the Pope entangles you in the Devil's net! If you say to me that he has the keys of St. Peter, then tell me why he banishes St. Peter's teaching from the Bible? By our baptism it is forbidden to us that God's sacraments should be bought or sold! But now let him read that in his black book, which the Devil gave him, and take his tune from Hell's pipe! Ye cardinals, ye roof your choirs well; but our old holy altar stands exposed to evil weather.

This is strong language for the year 1200. In other poems Walther speaks of the inefficiency of a profession of faith, without good works, very much as any practical Christian of our day might speak. His boldness was equal to his honesty: he gives us a very distinct impression of his fine, manly, independent character, of a life unstained by the prevalent vices of his day, and of a simple, loving nature which his many years of court-life do not seem to have vitiated. When he asks Frederick II. to give him a home, it is because he feels that his services deserve reward; and, indeed, the property he finally received was barely sufficient to support him in his age. The distinguished Minnesingers were nearly all of noble blood; for the nobles of Provence and Arragon had set the fashion, and it was not so easy for a plebeian minstrel to crowd his way into the company of the knightly singers. Walther von der Vogelweide did this—for he

was ennobled late in life—and he also, by the force of his native genius, made his supremacy acknowledged. Although we know less of him than of many of his contemporaries, we cannot study the literature of the day without finding that his character immediately detaches itself from the company around him, and shines out alone in its clearness and sweetness and strength.

The number of Minnesingers is quite large, but many of them have but a slight literary importance, and I will not burden your memories with a complete catalogue. Passing over Ulric von Singenberg, who wrote a lament for Walther von der Vogelweide, I shall pause a moment at the name of Nithart, who is interesting from the circumstance that, although he was a wealthy noble, the material of his songs was mostly drawn from peasant life, and have almost a coarsely realistic character, while Walther, the born peasant, is always noble and dignified in his verses. Nithart was also a crusader; his poetic life belongs to the middle of the thirteenth century. His pictures of common life, dances, festivals, love-making, tricks and quarrels, are lively and sometimes amusing, but prosaic in tone. He was a ready rhymer rather than a poet.

One of Walther von der Vogelweide's imitators, who during his life acquired nearly an equal fame, is called the Marner, an old German word corresponding exactly with our Mariner. His real name is unknown, although he was said to have been a nobleman. His verses have

a more didactic character than those of his master, but in rhythmical form they show an almost equal skill. Walther was really the first who gave fluency and music to the High-German dialect, and his followers, whatever might be their amount of talent, were quick to copy the external graces of his style. Of the many poems of the Marner, I will quote one in which he mentions the themes he is accustomed to sing at court:

Ich sunge ein bîspel oder ein spel,
ein wârheit oder ein lüge,
ich sunge wol, wie Titurel

die Templeise bî dem grâle züge,
wie süeze ist Sirênen dôn und arc des cocatrillen zorn.
Ich sunge ouch drachen viurîn kel,
unt wie der grîfe vlüge,
wie sich des salamander vel
in heizem viure strahte und smüge
unt wie sich teilt shimaeren lîp unt wie diu vipper wirt geborn.
Ich sunge ouch wol, wie sîniu eiger brüeten kan der strûz;
ich sunge ouch wol, wie sich der fênix junget ûz;
ich sunge ouch wie der lît,

der manigen in der wunderburc verslunden hât dur sînen gît.

I would sing a fable or a tale,

A truth or lie, for good example;
How forth to seek the Holy Grail
Titurel led the knights of the Temple;
How fierce the rage of crocodile, how sweet the Siren's tone.
I would sing of the fiery dragon's throat,
And how the griffin flieth;
And how the salamander's coat
Unto the flame replyeth;

How the Chimæra's body parts, and how the snake is grown.

I would also sing how on its eggs the ostrich broods;
And how the phœnix is renewed, burned up with spicy woods;
And also where the hero lies asleep,
Who slew so many in the magic keep.

Ein wunder wont dem hove bî
mit wunderlichen siten :
mit pfâwen schriten,

unt mit menschen triten
kan ez lâgen, lôsen, biten ;
ez hât mit sîner zungen wâfen
maneges herren muot versniten :
dem kan ich gesingen niht, nûn
rede ist an ime gar verlorn.

'Mid wondrous customs, thus,
the wondrous beast at court
Struts like a peacock, for their
sport,
With human feet and height,
Must lie and beg and bite,
And many a lord must wound,
with tongue that knows to
smite :
For such I cannot sing—'twould
be a mock delight !

The scornful air of the closing words suggests to us that the poem is satirical, the subjects being those demanded by the taste of the courts, not those which the poet would prefer to sing. The Marner was another bold, independent character who scourged the vices and follies of his day; but he lived beyond the protection of the Hohenstaufens, and, after an old age of poverty and persecution, was basely murdered.

Among the other minstrels of note were Burkhardt von Hohenfels and Ulric von Winterstetten, whose songs are noted for illustrations drawn from the knightly pastime of the chase; the two Reinmars, Reinmar the Old and Reinmar von Zweter, agreeable singers, but without original character; Master Johannes Hadlaub, who has left behind him some very sweet pastoral and harvest songs; the monk Wernher; Conrad of Würzburg, and Heinrich von Meissen, who became famous under the name of *Frauenlob*. In addition to these, there were many who were known by epithets, either

assumed or bestowed upon them by the people—such as the Chancellor, the Undaunted and the Schoolmaster of Esslingen. In sifting their productions, we do not often find more than a few grains of genuine, vital poetry in a bushel of wordy chaff; but they all have a real value, from their constant references to the manners, morals and customs of the age. I will quote a few lines from Conrad of Würzburg, written about forty years after Walther von der Vogelweide, to show what progress had been made in developing the rhythmical capacity of the language:

Jâr lanc wil diu linde	Year-long will the linden
vom winde	The wind in
sich velwen,	Go waving,
Din sich vor dem walde	While a tempest sorest
ze balde	The forest
kan selwen;	Is braving;
Trûren ûf der heide	To wail the moorland through,
mit leide	One's sorrow
man üebet;	Is doubled;
sus hât mir diu minne	Sweetly love's pretenses
die sinne	My senses
betrüebet.	Have troubled.

It is not often that Goethe, or Rückert, or Uhland employs a difficult metre with such apparent lightness and ease. But in Conrad's lines the sound is more than the sense. Toward the close of the thirteenth century, a great elaboration and refinement of form takes the place of fancy and sentiment, and from this sign we anticipate the coming decay of literature.

Even Ulric von Winterstetten, to whom we must grant some amount of native talent, took the pains to write verses in lines of a single syllable, such as this:

Wol ûf, ir kint,
sint
vrô,
sô
muoz
buoz
sorgen sîn!
Trûren, var hin!
Sin,
muot
tuot
geil,
heil
werden schîn.

It is impossible to translate this; but an imitation will answer just as well:

At night,
In fright,
Says the wife:
"My life,
Hear,
Near,
Noise!"

"Boys?"
"No,—
Guess!"
"Oh,
Yes!
That's
Cats!"

One more quotation from Conrad of Würzburg will be enough to make clear the degeneracy into which the old German minstrelsy fell. This is a stanza from his "Winter-Song":

Schoene doene klungen
jungen liuten, triuten
inne minne mêrte;
sunder wunder baere

swaere wilden bilden
heide, weide rêrte,
dô vrô sâzen die
der ger lâzen spil wil hie.

Instead of a translation, I shall quote a few lines from Thomas Hood's comical proposition to write blank verse in rhyme, which is very much like it:

"Evening has come, and from the dark park, hark,
The signal of the setting sun—one gun!
And six is sounding from the chime, prime time
To go and see the Drury-Lane Dane slain—
Or hear Othello's jealous doubt spout out,
Or Macbeth raving at that shade-made blade,
Denying to his frantic clutch much touch!"

I give these grotesque specimens, because there is a poetical moral to be drawn from them. I hardly need to point it out. A poem may have perfect form, as a woman may have perfect physical beauty; but the perfect poem requires feeling and thought, as the perfect woman must have goodness and intelligence. Form, alone, gives us a waxen doll, heartless and brainless. This characteristic is not peculiar to the age of the Minnesingers: there are volumes of poetry, published every year, in which we find it very clearly manifested.

The minstrelsy of that age, like all popular forms of literature, presents two different aspects. We may say, indeed, that every era of literature has three classes of writers—first, the Masters, who originate new forms of expression, and, by the power of their genius, force the race to accept them; second, the honest secondary in-

telligences, who imitate and illustrate and popularize, clear-sighted to follow though incapable of leading; and lastly, that class of vain and shallow minds who, as Tennyson says, turn the new flower into a weed,—who unconsciously parody the very spirit which they aspire to possess. Yet their grotesque affectation may deceive a portion of the public, and they may die in the full conviction of literary immortality. Among the Minnesingers, I should only admit Walther von der Vogelweide to the rank of a master. In the second class I should place the Marner, Reinmar von Zweter, Master Hadlaub and Burkhardt von Hohenfels; while no better representative of the extravagant burlesque of imitation would be desired than Ulric von Lichtenstein. He was an Austrian, of the same race from which the present Princes of Lichtenstein are descended, and appears to have begun his career as a knight and minstrel about the year 1223. If Cervantes had known anything of the German Minnesingers, we might charge him with borrowing parts of his Don Quixote from Ulric von Lichtenstein's history. The latter deliberately chose his Dulcinea, and for years devoted himself to singing her praises, although she only returned him scorn and ridicule. He relates that she would not at first look at him on account of his having three lips. He thereupon went to Gratz and employed a surgeon to cut off one of them. It was probably a hare-lip, the upper one counting for two. Then, at a tourney in Brixen, one of his

fingers was wounded, and he sent her word that he had lost it for her sake. The lady discovered soon afterward that the wound was healed, and she so ridiculed him that he had the finger actually cut off and sent to her in a box lined with green velvet. Afterward, he dressed himself as a woman, braided his hair with pearls, called himself "Dame Venus," and traveled through Germany and Italy, challenging the knights to fight with him (or her), in honor of the scornful lady. He traveled in state, with banners, marshals, heralds, musicians, and a retinue of men and women, and it is gravely related that, during the years of this singular and most expensive pilgrimage, he fought no less than five hundred and seventy-eight times. Yet, when it was over, and he called upon the lady for whose sake he had dared so much, she had him thrown out of the window of her castle! She assured him repeatedly that she not only did not love but actually hated him, and it is not probable that there was the least love on his side. She was a married lady, and he had his own wife and children in his castle of Lichtenstein; yet for thirty-three years he kept up the absurd farce, writing poems, singing and fighting, followed by crowds of silly knights who admired his constancy and bravery, and enjoying an immense amount of popularity. The colossal affectation of his career seems to us little short of idiocy; but every age has the same phenomena, and it would not be difficult to find names now, both in Europe and

America, which have become notorious from as absurd reasons as that of Ulric von Lichtenstein in his day. I will quote nothing from his long-winded work, called "*Frauendienst*," Woman's Service, because I find it a prosaic, tiresome performance, of little more value in German literature, except as a curious picture of the times, than are the novels of Sylvanus Cobb in ours.

Heinrich von Meissen, or *Frauenlob*, has also a more conspicuous place than he deserves. It was his good luck that he lived at the close of the period when minstrels had become scarce, and the glory of the better singers threw a reflected light on his own performances. He is said to have established the first school of minstrelsy in Mainz, in the early part of the fourteenth century. When he died, women bore his body, with weeping and lamentations, to his tomb in the cathedral, and, as an old chronicler says, "poured so much wine upon the tombstone, that the whole church was flooded with it." In the schools afterward established, where versification was taught as we teach grammar or arithmetic, he is credited as the inventor of thirty-five measures. About five hundred of his strophes have survived, —quite enough to enable us to judge of his quality as an author. He has given us his own opinion of his merits in one of his poems. Speaking of Reinmar, Wolfram von Eschenbach and Walther von der Vogelweide, he says: "They sang of the froth and neglected the substance, but I dip from the very bottom of the ves-

sel, and the shrine of my song should be splendidly crowned. I am the master of all those who have sung heretofore, or who sing now. I wear the yoke of profoundest thought, and my words and harmonies never wander from the track of the true sense." In spite of these lofty claims, the most of his poems are so obscure, artificial and involved, that they cannot now be read with any satisfaction. Yet, when he chooses to be simple and natural, singing some theme which appeals to the common sentiment of man, he has still the power to give us pleasure. One of his poems, entitled "Honor Women!" commences:

Ô reiniu wîp, ûfhaltunge aller welde	O woman, pure, all worlds in thee preserving
gên Gote unt gên der muoter sîn,	For God and for His Mother divine,
als hie mit sange ich melde,	My song proclaims, from thee unswerving,
si sint der hôhsten saelden schrîn:	Of highest souls art thou the shrine:
kein meister mac ir hôhez lop voldenken.	No master can exhaust thy lofty praises.

The phrase *ûfhaltunge aller welde* suggests to us at once the exclamation of Faust, "*Inbegriff von allen Himmeln.*" Frauenlob stands at the close, as Diethmar von Aist at the beginning of this bright period of one hundred and fifty years, during which the seeds of all modern lyric poetry were planted in Provence and Germany.

The most famous event in the literary history of the Middle Ages—the *Sängerkrieg*, or War of the Minstrels,

in the Wartburg Castle, near Eisenach,—is such a singular mixture of possible fact and evident fiction, that we shall probably never ascertain the true story. German scholars seem to be agreed that there was a meeting of Minnesingers, a tournament of song, at the Wartburg, between the years 1204 and 1208; but they cannot satisfactorily explain in what manner the romantic legend grew, so many features of which were long accepted as undoubted history. The old chroniclers relate that the combat took place at the court of Hermann, Landgraf or Count of Thuringia, and his wife, the Countess Sophia. There were present Wolfram von Eschenbach, Walther von der Vogelweide, Heinrich von Ofterdingen, Reinmar von Zweter, Biterolf and the Virtuous Scribe. The penalty of failure was death by the executioner's hand, and this fate fell upon Henry of Ofterdingen, who implored the mediation of the Countess Sophia, claiming that he was unfairly judged, and asking time to bring his master, the minstrel Klingsor, from Hungary, to aid him. The prayer was granted: Henry went to Hungary, reappeared with Klingsor in a year and a day, and the latter succeeded, with the devil's assistance, in rivaling, though not overcoming, Wolfram von Eschenbach. The result was, however, that Henry of Ofterdingen's life was saved.

The few facts are, that the Landgraf Hermann of Thuringia was a patron of literature; that both Wolfram von Eschenbach and Walther von der Vogelweide were his

guests in the Wartburg, and that the courtly minstrels who chanted their own songs sometimes met in rivalry. But Reinmar von Zweter belongs to a later generation, the Hungarian Klingsor is certainly a fictitious character, and there is no satisfactory evidence of a Heinrich von Ofterdingen, if the Minnesinger who is simply named Heinrich be not the same. The poetic fragment, purporting to be the strife between Klingsor and Wolfram von Eschenbach, betrays the speech of the end of the thirteenth century, and some conjecture that it was written by Frauenlob.

Not many years ago, the restoration of the Wartburg, which afterward became the scene of the most memorable year of Luther's life, was undertaken by the Grand-Duke of Saxe-Weimar, and it was found that many windows and arched galleries in the most beautiful Byzantine style, frescoes and other forms of ornament, dating from the time of the Landgraf Hermann, had been filled up, plastered over and hidden by later masonry. The ancient halls have now resumed their original character, and the walls within which the minstrels sang, the raised dais for the ruling prince and his wife, and the deep mullioned windows through which they looked on the wooded mountain ranges around, stand at present as they then stood. While there, knowing that at least two renowned Minnesingers had certainly sung within that hall, I found it easy to believe the picturesque legend.

The story of Tannhäuser belongs to the same neighborhood, and some traditions connect him with the war of the minstrels, although he was contemporary with Hermann's son, Ludwig, and with the latter's wife, St. Elizabeth of Hungary. The Hörselberg, a barren ridge which rises over an intervening valley, northeast of the Wartburg, is believed to be the mountain of Venus, in the interior of which Tannhäuser found the heathen goddess and her court.

In order to appreciate the legend of Tannhäuser, it must be remembered that the ancient gods were not immediately forgotten after the triumph of Christianity. The common people gradually came to look upon them as evil demons, who still existed, and the one to be most dreaded was Dame Venus. She was supposed to live somewhere, with her Nymphs and Graces, in a wonderful subterranean garden. The knight Tannhäuser, in the legend, finds the entrance to this garden, descends and lives there a year in the midst of pagan delights. He grows weary at last, comes back to the world, recognizes his sin, and wanders as a penitent pilgrim to Rome. There he confesses everything to the Pope, and begs for pardon: but the Pope, holding a staff in his hand, answers: "Sooner shall this dry stick burst into blossoms, than pardon come to a sin like thine!" Tannhäuser wanders back to Germany in despair; but three days after his departure the Pope's staff bursts into blossom. A messenger is instantly

dispatched with the news of the miracle and the pardon. It is too late: Tannhäuser has already gone down again to the garden of Dame Venus, and never returns. Thus the name of the real Tannhäuser is surrounded by a romantic interest, at once tragic and tender, which is justified by nothing in his life or his rather commonplace poems. He was an Austrian, a crusader, and died about the year 1270. With all the magic which later poets, and last of all a modern composer, have thrown backward upon his name, I find it impossible to feel any interest in his poetry. The concluding lines of his "Minstrel's Lament" will give a sufficient idea of his style:

Mîn hûs, daz stât gar âne dach, swie ich dar zuo gebûre,	My house, it stands without a roof, however I repair it;
mîn stube steht gar âne tür, daz ist mir worden swaere,	My chamber stands without a door, 'tis hard for me to bear it;
Mîn kelre ist in gevallen, mîn küche ist mir verbrunnen,	My cellar-vaults have tumbled in, my kitchen has been burned up,
mîn stadel stât gar âne bant, des höus ist mir zerrunnen;	My barn it stands without a lock, no hay could there be turned up:
mir ist gebachen, noch gemaln, gebrûwen ist mir selten;	They never grind nor bake for me, they brew for me but rarely,
mir ist diu wât ze dünne gar, des mag ich wol entgelten:	My coat is worn so very thin I am treating it unfairly;
mich darf durch geraete nieman niden, noch beschelten.	None has a right to envy me, still less to scold me squarely.

There is not much of the transcendental worshiper

of the antique goddess in these lines; but, fortunately, when we come to substitute History for Romance, if we find many shadowy beauties shrink away to a basis of rather coarse fact, we are compensated by the discovery of unsuspected grace and nobility and gentle manhood. It is a bright, animated, eventful age which we find reflected in the literature of the Minnesingers; not trivial, for the stern premonition of coming struggle is felt; frank, artless, and natural, but almost never coarse; original, because reaped on fresh fields, by fresh hands; and with a direct impress of Nature, which we find for the first time in any literature. We can only express it properly by its German word *Gemüth*, which, in our language, includes both feeling and sentiment. A hundred years later, the kindred blood sent the same warmth to the heart and brain of Chaucer, and an independent English literature began to grow, not by the same stages, but by related laws of development. No one can study the two periods, without feeling how near the natures of the races still were to each other.

III.

THE MEDIÆVAL EPICS.

I HAVE already said that the age of the Minnesingers was especially an age of epic poetry, and that many of its authors were renowned in both qualities. It is possible that the brief lyrics and songs of love and of the charms of nature, performed as important a service in popularizing literature and furthering the higher education of the whole people, as the somewhat ponderous epics of the time; but the broad and massive character of epic poetry, the deeper elements with which it deals, give it an intrinsic dignity and authority which cannot belong to the short flights of lyric song. The latter may furnish the ornament of the temple, but the former contributes the blocks and the pillars which give it space and permanence.

In examining the German epics of the Middle Ages, and tracing the sources of their material, as well as the tastes or fashions of thought which have had an influence in determining their character, we soon discover the presence of two very clearly separated elements. One has a racy flavor of the native soil, the other betrays the presence of foreign ingredients. One seems to have grown through the richer development of that

autochthonous poetic genius which produced the "*Hildebrandslied*," itself a descendant of older and wholly lost lays of the ancient Teutonic gods and heroes; the other, starting from the Latin epic, "Walther of Aquitaine," in the tenth century, and revived by the German "*Eneid*," of Heinrich von Veldeck, in the twelfth, assimilated the romantic material of Wales, Cornwall and Brittany, became quickened with a different soul and embodied itself in different forms. In short, as the simplest distinction between the two, I should call the first the epic poetry of the People, and the second the epic poetry of the Courts. One is represented by the "*Nibelungenlied*," with its continuations, and "*Gudrun;*" the other by the epics of "*Tristan*," "*Parzival*," "*Erek*," "*Iwein*," "*Titurel*" and the shorter heroic ballads.

I am obliged to omit a numerous class of works which appeared during the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, many of which have been preserved, for the reason that they are only embodiments of the legends of the Church, the lives of the saints, or the exploits of Greek and Roman heroes, in a poetical form—rhymed narratives of little literary value, although they were no doubt important agents in the education of the race. In days when there were neither newspapers, political meetings, elections, societies of Reform or cheap literature, men might very well sit down to the perusal of an epic of seventy-five or one hundred thousand lines; but when I select the five or six, which really deserve notice

as illustrations of the narrative genius of that age, and find that they will average nearly twenty thousand lines apiece, I find my task sufficient, and must not go beyond it.

The "*Nibelungenlied*" and "*Gudrun*" must be treated separately. They floated along, under the favoring current which bore the courtly epics, almost unnoticed, and working upon the race by very slow and subtle agencies. Their influence on the German authors of our day has been much greater than it appears to have been upon the minstrels of the Middle Ages. But the epics of Gottfried von Strasburg, Wolfram von Eschenbach, Hartmann von Aue and the Priest Conrad, had an immediate effect upon the language and literary tastes of the educated classes throughout Germany. They have a monumental character in the literary history of the race; they are part of the expression of a great and wonderful period, not dark, as it has been foolishly called, but full of scattered lights, uncertain as morning, restless as early spring, and, like both, bringing life unto men.

Like the Elizabethan dramatists, all the famous epic poets and Minnesingers were contemporaries; the life of Wolfram von Eschenbach, the greatest of the former, from about 1150 to about 1230, covers the epic and the best of the lyric period. The Latin narrative poetry of the tenth and eleventh centuries, and the versified religious legends, undoubtedly prepared the

way for the greater works which followed; but the first fresh impulse toward the creation of genuine heroic epics was given, between 1170 and 1180, by the nearly simultaneous production of three narrative poems of great length,—the "*Rolandslied*" of Priest Conrad, the "*Alexanderslied*" of Priest Lamprecht, and the "*Eneid*" of Heinrich von Veldeck. The first of these is a translation of the earlier French "*Chanson de Roland;*" the second is a rhymed history of Alexander the Great, with romantic amplifications; and the third is a very free translation, in the romantic manner, from Virgil. The popularity of these works may have been one cause which led the greater poets to exercise their genius in the same field, since they too commenced their literary career as Minnesingers.

The subject of the "*Rolandslied*" belongs to the literature of France. I need only say that Geoffrey of Monmouth, whose chronicles of Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table were professedly translations of the Welsh legends, preceded the German epics by fifty or sixty years, so that their material was certainly drawn from him and from the French versions of the same legends. History gives us little knowledge of either Roland or of Arthur: we cannot be sure of much more than the simple fact that there were such persons; but the marvelous legendary growths which collect around certain names, have an astonishing vitality: like the air-plants of Brazil, their gorgeous blossoms

and exquisite fragrance seem to spring from nothing. The "*Chanson de Roland*" is no longer read, except by scholars, but the famous paladin still lives and wields his sword Durindarte, and blows his tremendous horn at Roncęval, in Ariosto's "*Orlando*" and in the exquisite ballads of Uhland. During the Middle Ages, the different *sagenkreise*, or legendary circles, sometimes became curiously mixed, not only with each other, but with certain striking episodes of classic history. Thus the feat of Xerxes at the Hellespont was transferred to Charlemagne, who, as early as the tenth century, was believed by the people to have built a bridge across the sea in order to visit Palestine. Then Charlemagne's pilgrimage was transferred to Arthur, who was said to have made a journey to Jerusalem at the invitation of the Sultan,—although he lived long before there were any sultans! As the legend passed from age to age, each version took the entire stamp and character of the day—precisely as Tennyson's Arthur and Geraint and Elaine and Guinevere are not Celts of the sixth century, but ideal English men and women of the nineteenth. I doubt, indeed, whether any literary work would be generally acceptable to the people if this were not so—that is, if the speech, customs and character of former ages were reproduced with historical accuracy. But the mirage, which the Romancers impose between far-off, insignificant circumstances and our eyes, turns the former into grand, illusive forms. Arthur, for example,

seems to have been the owner or feudal lord of the island of Avalon, on the coast of Brittany—the name Avalon signifying apple-trees. After his death, it was said in Cornwall that he had gone to Avalon, and the word gradually came to signify some Armoric Elysium, whence he would return in time and drive the Saxons from Britain. In Tennyson's verse, the mysterious transformation becomes complete, and we read of Arthur carried away to

> "The island-valley of Avilion
> Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
> Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
> Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard lawns
> And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea."

So the Arthurian legends become larger, broader, and transformed in many important features, in passing into German epic song. Their personages are advanced from the sixth century to the twelfth, and their love, sorrow, jealousy and revenge express themselves according to the fashion of the later time. But, as in the old Flemish paintings, we can study the costume of the artist's time and home as well in a Holy Family as in a tavern scene, so here the foreign theme is only an illustration of the tastes, opinions and habits of the age.

The wonderful age of epic poetry in Germany, under the Hohenstaufen Emperors, lasted about as long as the age of English drama, under Elizabeth and James I.—about fifty years. It is difficult to describe several epics satisfactorily, in a single lecture; but I

may perhaps be able to enlist your interest by showing how the same material which we find in them has taken possession of modern Literature and Art. They were all inspired by the half-historic, half-romantic legends which already existed. The chief of these were the following:—first—the oldest Scandinavian Eddas, with the story of Sigurd and Brynhilda: second—a lost group of Gothic and Burgundian legends, one of which we find in the Lay of Hildebrand: third—the Celtic group of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table: fourth—the search for the Holy Grail; and lastly, a great number of subordinate legends, partly growing out of these, partly borrowed from the Orient during the Crusades, and partly original. Now, it is very singular to notice how all this material has been worked over, with little change except that of detail, in the literature of our day. I need only recall to your memory Bulwer's epic of "King Arthur;" Longfellow's "Golden Legend;" Tennyson's "Idylls of the King;" Matthew Arnold's "Tristram and Iseult;" Swinburne's poem of "Tristram and Iseult;" Morris's "Lovers of Gudrun," and "Sigurd the Volsung;" the German, Jordan's "*Nibelungenlied*," and finally, Wagner's operas of "*Lohengrin*" and the "*Nibelungen Trilogy*," performed at Bayreuth. It will certainly help us to estimate the true value of these works, by knowing the sources from which they sprang. Moreover, by taking parallel passages from the poems of the German and the

modern authors, we have the best possible illustration of the changes in modes of poetic expression which have taken place in the lapse of six hundred and fifty years.

I shall adhere to the plan, which I stated in beginning these lectures, of noticing only those works which give a distinct, characteristic stamp to each literary period. Therefore, in treating of the German epics of the twelfth century, I shall select the three greatest representatives, and say nothing of the crowd of inferior singers who imitated them.

It is remarkable that we know so little of the lives of these three principal epic poets. We can only conjecture, from some collateral evidence, the probable time when they were born and died. Gottfried von Strasburg seems to have first died, and Wolfram von Eschenbach to have outlived Hartmann von Aue. I shall commence with the last, as certainly the least endowed. It is unknown whether he was of Swiss or of Suabian birth; it is only known that he was noble. He was one of the crusaders under Barbarossa, devoted himself to poetry after his return, and died somewhere between 1210 and 1220. He seems to have enjoyed a great deal of popularity, and Gottfried of Strasburg, in his "*Tristan*," ranks him high above Wolfram von Eschenbach, probably because the latter was a more dangerous rival.

Hartmann von Aue wrote four epics—"*Erek*," "*Gregorius vom Steine*" (Gregory of the Rock), "*Der arme Heinrich*" (Poor Henry), and "*Iwein*." Three of these

were based on foreign originals, from which they differ only in a few details and in manner of treatment. One, the "Poor Henry," appears to have been derived from a tradition in the poet's own family, or, at least, in his native province. For the subject of his "*Erek*," I refer you to Tennyson's poem of "Enid," in his "Idylls of the King." In Hartmann's epic Enid is also the wife, but the husband is named Erek instead of Geraint. The story is almost exactly the same, except that Tennyson reconciles Geraint with his wife immediately after the slaughter of Earl Doorm in his castle, while Hartmann first adds another adventure. He brings Erek to the castle of Brandigan (Burgundy?), whose lord has overcome eighty knights in combat, and holds their eighty ladies imprisoned. Erek slays the lord of Brandigan, liberates the ladies, and then goes with Enid to Arthur's Court. It may interest you to compare corresponding passages from the German crusader and the modern English poet:

Nû kam ez alsô nâch ir site,	Now happened it as was their wont,
daz er umb einen mitten tac	That he, about the warm noontide
an ir arme gelac.	Was sleeping by her side.
Nu gezam des wol der sunnen schîn,	The sun therein so fairly beamed
daz er dienest muoste sîn,	That he their servant seemed,
wand er den gelieben zwein	When he the wedded pair
durch ein vensterglas schein	So through the window there
unt het die kemenâten	Did light, that in the room,
liehtes wol berâten,	There nothing was of gloom,

daz sî sich mohten undersehen.
Daz ir von fluochen was geschehen,
dâ begunde se denken an :
vil gâhes ruhte sî hin dan ;
si wânde, daz er sliefe.
Einen siuften nam sî tiefe
unde sach in vaste an ;
sî sprach : " Wê dir, vil armer man,
unt mir ellendem wîbe,
daz ich bî mînem lîbe
sô manegen fluoch veruemen sol ! "
Dô vernam Êrec die rede wol.
Als si der rede het gedaget,
Êrec sprach : " Frowe Ênîte, saget,
waz sint iwer sorgen,
die ir dâ klaget verborgen ? "
Nû wolde sis gelougent hân ;
Êrec sprach : " Lât die rede stân ;
des nemet in ein zil,
daz ich die rede wizzen wil.
Ir müezet mir benamen sagen,
waz ich iuch da hôrte klagen,
daz ir vor mir sus habt verswigen."
Sî vorhte, daz sî wurde gezigen
von im ander dinge
unt seite imz mit gedinge ;
daz er ir daz gehieze,
daz erz âne zorn lieze.

And they each other well could see.
Then fell to thinking she,
That he, through her, was execrate ;
Thence was her trouble swift and great ;
She thought he was asleep ;
Now sigheth she full deep,
And looketh on him steadily.
She said : " Poor man, alas for thee
And me, thy miserable wife,
That ever in my life
So many curses should receive ! "
All this did Erek well perceive :
When she that speech had finished,
" Tell me, Dame Enid," Erek said,
" What then may be your pain,
That you so secretly complain ? "
Now when deny would she,
Said Erek : " Let your talking be ;
And be your duty so,
As I your words desire to know.
Verily you must say again
What now I heard you sore complain,
What you from me have thus concealed."
She feared lest there might be revealed
To him, quite other thing,
And spoke, he promising
To hear withouten wrath,
What now she spoken hath.

Als er vernam die maere,
waz diu rede waere,
er sprach: "Der rede ist gnuoc getân!"
Zehant hiez er sî ûf stân,
daz sî sich wol kleite
unte an leite
daz beste gewalte,
daz sî iender haete.
Sinen knaben er seite,
daz man im sîn ros bereite
und ir phärt der frowen Ênîten;

er sprach, er wolde rîten
uz kurzwilen:
des begunden sî dô îlen.

When he the story heard
What was her spoken word,
"Enough of speech!" then said he.
He bade her rise, get ready,
And dress herself with care
In garments fair,
Donning the best array
That in her presses lay.
The page he bade with speed
Prepare his own strong steed,
Dame Enid's palfrey there beside;

He said that he would ride
For pastime far away:
So forward hastened they.

Tennyson's "Enid":

"At last it chanced that on a summer morn
(They sleeping each by other) the new sun
Beat thro' the blindless casement of the room,
And heated the strong warrior in his dreams:
Who, moving, cast the coverlet aside,
And bared the knotted column of his throat,
The massive square of his heroic breast,
And arms on which the standing muscle sloped,
As slopes a wild brook o'er a little stone,
Running too vehemently to break upon it.
And Enid woke and sat beside the couch,
Admiring him, and thought within herself,
Was ever man so grandly made as he?
Then, like a shadow, past the people's talk
And accusation of uxoriousness
Across her mind, and bowing over him,
Low to her own heart, piteously she said:

"'O noble breast, and all-puissant arms,
Am I the cause, I the poor cause that men
Reproach you, saying all your force is gone?

I *am* the cause, because I dare not speak
And tell him what I think and what they say.
And yet I hate that he should linger here;
I cannot love my ord and not his name.
Far liever had I gird his harness on him,
And ride with him to battle and stand by,
And watch his mightful hand striking great blows
At caitiffs and at wrongers of the world.
Far better were I laid in the dark earth,
Not hearing any more his noble voice,
Not to be folded more in these dear arms,
And darkened from the high light in his eyes,
Than that my lord thro' me should suffer shame.
Am I so bold, and could I so stand by,
And see my dear lord wounded in the strife,
Or may be pierced to death before mine eyes,
And yet not dare to tell him what I think,
And how men slur him, saying all his force
Is melted into mere effeminacy?
O me, I fear that I am no true wife.'

"Half inwardly, half audibly she spoke,
And the strong passion in her made her weep
True tears upon his broad and naked breast,
And these awoke him, and by great mischance
He heard but fragments of her later words,
And that she feared she was not a true wife.
And then he thought, 'In spite of all my care,
For all my pains, poor man, for all my pains,
She is not faithful to me, and I see her
Weeping for some gay knight in Arthur's hall.'
Then tho' he loved and reverenced her too much
To dream she could be guilty of foul act,
Right thro' his manful breast darted the pang
That makes a man, in the sweet face of her
Whom he loves most, lonely and miserable.
At this he hurl'd his huge limbs out of bed,
And shook his drowsy squire awake and cried,
'My charger and her palfrey,' then to her,
'I will ride forth into the wilderness;

For tho' it seems my spurs are yet to win,
I have not fall'n so low as some would wish.
And you, put on your worst and meanest dress
And ride with me.' And Enid ask'd, amaz'd,
'If Enid errs, let Enid learn her fault.'
But he, 'I charge you, ask not, but obey.'"

These passages illustrate not only the common source from which both poets derived their material, but also the different manner of treatment between a poet of the twelfth century and one of the nineteenth. Tennyson has endeavored to imitate the old epic simplicity—rather the Greek, it is true, than the German or Anglo-Saxon—but he cannot escape the atmosphere of our day. As compared with Hartmann von Aue, he has less of simple, direct, natural narration, and much more both of description and of subjective study of character.

I will pass over "Gregory of the Rock," founded on an obscure legend concerning Pope Gregory VII., which will not well bear repeating, and come to the "*Arme Heinrich.*" Here, again, the material has been used by a living poet, and you all are—or ought to be—familiar with it. The author is Longfellow, and the poem is the "Golden Legend." Instead of Heinrich von Aue, Longfellow calls the hero Prince Henry of Hoheneck, and gives him Walther von der Vogelweide as a friend. He takes only the thread of the story from Hartmann—the incurable disease, the self-sacrifice of the maiden, the journey to Salerno, and the happy termination of the story in her marriage with the prince, and has so en-

riched and adorned it with the fairest suggestions of his own genius that it becomes a new creation. Certainly no more exquisitely finished and harmonious poetical work has been written in this country than the "Golden Legend."

Hartmann's last epic, "*Iwein*," is taken from the traditions of King Arthur and the Round Table. The name *Iwein* is the Welsh *Evan*, the Russian *Ivan*, the English *John*. The poem, except toward its close, is a repetition of the adventures of the Knight Iwein, as related in the Welsh Mabinogion. This, no less than his other epics, bears the stamp of elegant mediocrity. His verse is carefully constructed, the separate episodes are often well narrated, but the characters are not consistent nor properly sustained, and the poem becomes wearisome to one accustomed to better models.

Nevertheless, among the German critics there are very different verdicts pronounced upon Hartmann von Aue. Some consider him an undoubted master, combining sentiment, power and purity of style: others condemn him for a total lack of high poetic instinct. Grimm, curiously enough, has expressed himself on both sides of the question in different works. If we avoid either extreme, yet place him decidedly below both Gottfried and Wolfram, I think we shall come nearer fixing his true place. But his importance in his age cannot be fairly estimated by our modern literary standards. The very smoothness and polish, which become

so wearisome to us when they are not penetrated with the presence of a strong informing spirit, may have been an agency of culture, as well as a charm, to his contemporaries.

Of Gottfried von Strasburg, we only know that he was probably a native of the city for which he is named; that he was not of noble family, but well educated, and apparently in good circumstances, and that he must have died, still comparatively young, before 1210. One of the old manuscripts has a portrait which represents him as a young man with long, curling locks, but its authenticity cannot be relied upon. He was perhaps a personal friend of Hartmann von Aue: it is not known that he ever met Wolfram von Eschenbach.

Gottfried also drew the subject of his one epic, "*Tristan*," from English and French sources. It had even been used before him by a German poet, Eilhart von Oberg, who, some thirty years before him, wrote a poem called "*Tristan*" in the Low-German language. Like the "*Erek*" and "*Arme Heinrich*" of Hartmann, you will find the substance of the story in poems by two living authors —in Tennyson's Idyll of "The Last Tournament," and in the "Tristram and Iseult" of Matthew Arnold. The plot, in its general outline, has a resemblance to the story of Lancelot and Guinevere, but it is more tragic, because the element of magic is introduced, and the final sorrow is thus not the consequence of voluntary sin. It is, in fact, one of the most touching and beautiful of all those

purely romantic legends which were so popular over all Europe during the Middle Ages. None of the characters are historical: it seems to have had no original connection with the Arthurian stories, although it was afterward attached to them, and its invention is ascribed to some Celtic minstrel of Brittany.

The outline of the story is so simple that it may be told in a few words. Mark, the king of Cornwall, who resided at the castle of Tintágil, so famous as the residence of Uther, the father of Arthur, had a nephew, Tristan or Tristram, who was the most gallant and accomplished knight of his court. The king of Ireland, having promised the hand of his daughter Iseult, Isôt, or Isolde, as the name is differently written, to King Mark, Tristan was sent to bring the bride to Cornwall. On leaving Ireland, Iseult's mother gave her daughter's attendant lady, Brangæne by name, a love-potion to be secretly administered to her and her royal bridegroom on the day of their nuptials, in order to secure their wedded bliss. But the magic elixir was administered, by mistake, to Tristan and Iseult, during the voyage from Ireland to Cornwall. This fixed the destiny of both during the remainder of their lives. The spell compelled them to love each other, though separated by holy vows. The truth was soon discovered at the Court of Cornwall, and Tristan, to avoid his uncle's wrath, went to Brittany, where he met another Iseult—she is sometimes called Iseult of Brittany and some-

times Iseult of the White Hands—whom he married, more out of gratitude than love. But the infection of the magic potion was still in his blood: he wandered forth, tormented by his passion, and became the hero of many daring exploits which made his name famous in Britain. At last, sick, worn, and wounded nigh unto death he returned to Iseult of the White Hands, who is represented as a sweet, forbearing and forgiving woman. Her nursing was of no avail; and a messenger was sent to bring Queen Iseult of Cornwall, who alone could heal him. She fled from King Mark's Court, crossed to Brittany in a wild storm, and reached Tristan's castle just in time to see him die. Her heart broke, and she sank dead beside his corpse. Another version, which I prefer not to believe—in fact, refuse to believe—states that the vessel which was to bring Iseult of Cornwall was to hoist white sails on returning, if she was on board; but black sails, if it came without her. Iseult of Brittany bribed the captain to hoist black sails, in either case. When the ship was seen afar, and the color of the sails was reported to Tristan, he died in disappointment and despair: Iseult of Cornwall found only his dead body. King Mark, who had learned the story of the magic potion, had them buried side by side. He planted over Iseult a rose, and over Tristan a grape-vine, which twined themselves around each other as they grew, and could not be separated. It is curious how this last particular has lived to this day in the Ballad of Lord

Lovel, which is still sung by the country people of England:

> "And out of her breast there grew a red rose,
> And out of his breast a brier."

This is, of course, only the slightest framework of the story. Gottfried is a more daring and original poet than Hartmann; in the scenes and episodes, from first to last, he allows his invention full play, and so enriches and extends the material that, although his poem contains thirty books and twenty thousand lines, it was terminated by his death when only two-thirds had been written. Both the choice of the subject and the manner of treatment give evidence of true literary feeling and skill, but not of that grand, independent disregard of former models or prevalent fashions which marks the pathfinder. He took the forms which he found, with all their monotony, their interminable diffuseness and tolerance of digressions. They became purer and stronger in his hands; the great mass constantly moves with life, but it still lacks that harmony and mutual dependence of parts, that organic unity, which every great literary work must possess. There are many passages which may be read with delight, but the perusal of the whole work becomes a rather serious task.

"*Tristan*" commences with an *Eingang*, or Introduction, in which the author explains his reasons for writing the poem, and the service which he thereby hopes to ren-

der to the noble and loving among men. In the very first stanza we recognize his characteristic style:

Gedâchte man ir ze guote niht,	If we the good should never heed,
von den der werlde guot geschiht,	That haps on earth, as is decreed,
sô waere ez allez alse niht,	Then were it nothing worth, indeed,
swaz guotes in der werlt geschiht.	That any good should be decreed.

Another stanza, quite as terse and sound, is:

Tiur' unde wert ist mir der man,	Dear and worthy is the man
der guot and übel betrahten kan,	Who good and evil study can:
der mich und iegelîchen man	Who me and every other man
nâch sînem werde erkennen kan.	At his true value measure can.

The first book describes the loves of Prince Reivalin, the father of Tristan, and Blancheflœur, his mother, the sister of King Mark. Their meeting in the spring-time reminds us of the similar scene in the story of Lancelot and Guinevere.

There is such a charming brightness and freshness in the lines, that I must quote the passage:

diu senfte süeze sumerzit	The soft and tender summer air
diu haete ir süeze numüezekeit	Disturbed the summer idlesse there,
mit süezem flize an sî geleit.	And woke sweet industry, and fair.
diu kleinen wâltvógelîn,	The little wood-birds singing clear,
diu des ôren fröude solen sîn,	It should be such a joy to hear,

bluomen, gras, loup unde bluot
und swaz dem ougen sanfte tuot
und edele herze erfröuwen sol,
des was diu sumerouwe vol:
man vant dâ, swaz man wolte,
daz der méie bringen solte:
den schate bî der sunnen,
die linden bî dem brunnen,
die senften linden winde,
die Markes ingesinde
sîn wesen engegene macheten.
die liebten bluomen lacheten
ûz dem betoûwétem grase.
des meien friunt, der grüene wase,
der haete ûz bluomen ane geleit
sô wunneclîchin sumerkleit,
daz sî den lieben gesten
in ir oûgen widerglesten.
diu süeze boumbluot sach den man
sô rehte suoze lachende an,
daz sich daz herze und al der muot
wider an die lachende bluot
mit spilnden ougen machete
und ir állez wider lachete.
daz senfte vogelgedoene,
das süézé, daz sehoene,
daz ôren unde muote
vil dicke kumet ze guote,

Blossoms, grass, and leaves on trees,
And what the eye may gently please,
And joy to noble hearts may yield,
Of that was the summer-meadow filled.
All one wished was gathered then
Of what the May-time brings to men:
Shade, when the sun would sting;
Lindens beside the spring;
And soft, sweet winds that sent
Where Mark's retainers went,
A fresh delight to meet them:
And the bright buds laughed to greet them,
In the dewy grass that day;
And the green turf, the friend of May,
Wove from its own loveliness
So delightful a summer dress
That in the guests' glad eyes
'Twas mirrored in fairer wise.
The bloom of trees looked down on men
So openly, sweetly smiling then,
That heart and mind and senses lent
The dancing blood their light content,
And forever made reply
In the light of the merry eye.
All notes the birds repeat,—
So beautiful, so sweet,—
That unto heart and ear
So goodly 'tis to hear,

daz fulte dâ berc unde tal.
diu sâelige nahtegal,
daz liebe süeze vogelin,
daz iemer süeze mueze sîn,
daz kallete ûz der blüete
mit solher übermüete,
daz dâ manc edele herze van
frŏud' unde hohen muot gewan.

Rang there from hill and dale.
And the blissful nightingale—
The dear, sweet birdling she
That ever sweet shall be,
From out the blossoms trolled
So clear and over-bold,
That many a noble heart that heard,
Took joy and hope from the happy bird.

I have not space to describe the wealth of picturesque incidents with which Gottfried has amplified the story. Tristan is brought up as the son of Rual in Brittany, is carried off by the Norwegians, shipwrecked on the coast of Cornwall, and becomes, as a boy, hunter and minstrel at the Court of King Mark. Rual wanders over the world to find him, comes finally to Tintágil and discloses his relationship to the king, after which there are many adventures before Iseult enters upon the scene. The last book describes Tristan's wooing of Iseult with the White Hands in Brittany. He sings at the Court of the old Duke Jovelin, her father, a passionate song with the refrain, in the French of that day:

"Îsôt, ma drûe, Îsôt m'âmie,
en vûs ma mort, en vûs ma vie!"

thinking in his heart only of Iseult of Ireland, while the ladies and knights imagine that he is celebrating her of the White Hands.

Among other quaint and curious episodes, the twenty-fifth book is taken up with the account of a little dog

named *Petitcriu*, which a fairy in Avalon had presented to Gilan, the Duke of Wales. The hair of the dog shimmered in all bright colors, and around its neck there was a bell, the sound of which banished all sorrow from the heart of him who heard it. Tristan wins *Petitcriu* from Duke Gilan, and sends him to Iseult, whose sorrow for her absent lover is instantly soothed when she hears the bell; but, remembering that Tristan is wandering alone and unconsoled, she takes the bell from the dog's neck and throws it into the sea.

I find no better specimen of Gottfried's narrative style than the passage where Tristan and Iseult accidentally drink the love-potion:

Nu man gelante in eine habe:	Now they a harbor came unto,
nu gie daz volc almeiste abe	Where nearly all the vessel's crew
durch banekîe uz an daz lant;	Went forth to land, on pastime bent;
nu gienc ouch Tristant ze hant	And Tristan, also, straightway went
begrüezen unde beschouwen	To greet, with bliss o'erladen,
die liehten sîne vrouwen.	The brightness of the maiden.
Und als er zuozir nider gesaz,	And as he thus beside her sat,
unt redeten diz unde daz	And they had spoken of this and that,
von ir beider dingen,	Of things concerning both,
er bat im trinken bringen.	Said he: "To drink I were not loath."
Nune was dâ niemen inne	Now was there nó one there,
ân die küneginne,	Beside the Princess fair,
wan kleiniu juncfrôuwelîn;	But one small waiting-maid:
der einez sprach: "Seht, hie stât wîn	"The wine is here," she said,

in disem vâzzelîne."
Nein ! ezn was niht mit wine,
doch ez im geliche waere,

ez was diu waernde swaere,
diu endelôse herzenôt,

von der si beide lâgen tôt.
Nu was ab ir daz unrekant :
si stuont ûf unt gie hin ze hant,

dâ daz tranc und daz glas
verborgen unt behalten was.

Tristande, ir meister, bôt si daz ;

er bôt Îsôte vürbaz :
si tranc ungerne und überlanc,

unt gap dô Tristand, unde er tranc,
unt wânten beide, ez waere wûn.
Ie mitten gienc ouch Brangæn în,
unde erkande daz glas,

unt sach wol, waz der rede was.

Si erschrac sô sêre unde erkam,
daz ez ir alle ir kraft benam,
unt wart reht als ein tôte var.

Mit tôtem herzen gie si dar :

sî nam daz leide veige vaz,
si truog ez dannen unt warf daz

in den tobenden wilden sê.
" Owê mir armen," sprach se, " owê !

" Within this flagon fine."
Ah, no ! It was not wine :
Though wine's hue it might borrow,
'Twas filled with coming sorrow,
With endless heart-pain brimming high,
Whence both at last must die.
But she thereof was ignorant :
She rose, and straightway thither went,
Innocent and unchidden,
Where glass and drink were hidden ;
Brought to Tristàn, her master brave,
Who first to Iseult gave.
She first refused, then drank and laughed,
And gave to Tristàn, and he quaffed :
They both imagined, it was wine.
Then came Brangæne, saw the shine
Of that bright flagon, knew it well,
And did forbode the coming spell.
So great her terror was, that she
Lost force and senses utterly,
And she became as are the dead.
With deathly heart then forth she sped,
That fatal flagon of all the world
Took with her, threw, and downward hurled
Into the wild and raging sea.
" Ah, woe ! " she cried, " O, miserable me !

daz ich zer werlde ie wurt geborn!
Ich arme, wie hân ich verlorn
mîn êre unt mîne triuwe!
Daz ez Got iemer riuwe,
daz ich an dise reise ie kam,
daz mich der tôt dô niht ennam,

dô ich an dise veige vart
Mit Îsôte ie bescheiden wart!
Owê Tristan unde Îsôt!

diz tranc ist iuwer beider tôt!"

Nu daz diu maget und der man,

Îsôt unde Tristan,
den tranc getrunken beide, sâ

was ouch der werlde unmuoze dâ,
Minne, aller herzen lâgerîn,

unt sleich zir beider herzen în.

Ê sis ie wurden gewar,
dô stiez se ir sigevanen dar,

unt zôch si beide in ir gewalt:

si wurden ein und einvalt,

die zwei unt zwîvalt waren ê:

si zwei enwâren dô niht mê
widerwertic under în:
Îsôte haz, der was dô hin.
Diu suonerinne Minne,
diu haete ir beider sinne
von hazze alsô gereinet,
mit liebe alsô vereinet,

That ever to the world was born!
O, wretched me, how am I shorn
Of honor and fidelity!
Now God's great pity granted be,
That ever I this journey made,—
That death had not the purpose stayed,
Or ever on this voyage of woe
With Iseult I should go!
Iseult and Tristan — fatal draught!
'Tis woe and death to both that quaffed!"

Now that the maiden and the man,
Fair Iseult and Tristân,
Both drank the drink, upon them pressed
What gives the world such sore unrest,—
Love, skilled in sly and prowling arts,
And swiftly crept in both their hearts:
So, ere of him they were aware,
Stood his victorious banners there.
He drew them both into his power:
One and single were they that hour
That two and twofold were before.
They twain were verily no more
Opposèd thence, under his sway;
For Iseult's hate had flown away.
The troubled senses of the two
Sweet Love, the Expiator, knew,
Made clean of hate that blighted,
Gave love that so united,

daz ietweder dem andern was	That either to the other was
durhlûter als ein spigelglas.	More crystal-clear than mirror-glass.
Si haeten beide ein herze;	Both had one heart between them,
ir swaere was sîn smerze,	Her pain became his sorrow,
sîn smerze was ir swaere;	His sorrow was her pain;
si waren beide ein baere	And both were fondly fain
an liebe unde an leide,	Suffering to share, and bliss;
unt hâlen sich doch beide,	Yet hid the sense of this
unt tete daz zwîvel unde scham:	And felt both doubt and shame:
si schamte sich, er tete alsam;	She was abashed, and he the same;
zi zwîvelte an im, er an ir.	He doubted her, she doubted him.

The clearness and purity of the language will make themselves felt, even by one who is only slightly familiar with the German of the Middle Ages. Of all the Minnesingers and courtly epic poets, I find that Gottfried and Walther von der Vogelweide offer the least difficulty to the modern reader,—for the same reason that Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield" is the English book most easily read by a German: they combine elegance of style and the nicest choice of epithets with the greatest simplicity and fluency. To one already acquainted with German, the poets of the Middle Ages are more rapidly understood through the ear than through the eye, because the rules of spelling have been varied much more, during the last five or six hundred years, than those of pronunciation. The latter, in fact, still exists as a vulgar dialect, in the mountain regions of Central Germany. I have quoted,

purposely, the original text instead of the translations into Modern German, because I think a little attention will enable you to understand it nearly as well, and something of its peculiar racy flavor will always be felt, even when not entirely understood.

If you are familiar with Tennyson's poem of "The Last Tournament," in his "Idylls of the King," I beg you to notice the violence he has done to the original legend. He quite omits the episode of the magic love-potion, and presents Tristan and Iseult to us as a pair of common sinners. It is this very magic spell—the equivalent of the *Fate* of the Greek tragedies—which moves our deepest sympathies, and ennobles the two characters. Tristan cannot escape his devotion, in the legend; he is made faithful by a fatal spell; but Tennyson makes him sing: "Free love; free field; we love but while we may!"

Gottfried von Strasburg certainly possesses, in a very high degree, the talent of poetic narrative. We may tire of his interminable details, when reading several books of "*Tristan*" connectedly; but we may open the work anywhere, and we strike at once upon life, movement, brightness. The uniformity of the short iambic measure, which allows little variety of cadence, is not favorable to a long epic poem; but the authors of that age seem to have known only this measure and a rather rough alexandrine. The iambic pentameter appears in their lyrics, and moves with both sweetness and dig-

nity; yet it never occurred to them to use it in narrative poetry.

I shall last notice him whom I consider the greatest of the courtly minstrels — Wolfram von Eschenbach. Although he was a noble, we know less of his personal history than of that of the peasant Walther. The date of his birth is unknown; even the place is uncertain, although the village of Eschenbach, in Franconia—some fifty miles west of Nuremberg—has been fixed upon by most scholars. He was wholly uneducated—could not even read or write;—the materials of his epics were read to him by others, and his own verses were dictated to scribes. He lived for many years at the court of the Landgraf Hermann of Thuringia, in the Wartburg, and after the latter's death is supposed to have been driven away by the severe piety of his son Ludwig and St. Elizabeth of Hungary. He died somewhere about the year 1230.

When, in reading Gottfried von Strasburg's "*Tristan*," I came upon the passage in the eighth book, where he speaks of Hartmann von Aue, how he "through and through colors and adorns a story, how clear and pure is the crystal current of his words,"—followed by a reference to Wolfram von Eschenbach, as "the inventor of all strange things, hunter of wild stories,"—I could not reconcile the unfriendly words with the place and fame of the two authors. There is no probability that they ever met, or some personal enmity of Gottfried

might explain the passage. But, after more carefully examining Wolfram von Eschenbach's epics, I am satisfied that the radical difference between the poetic constitutions of the two men, together with the despotism of conventional tastes in their day, furnish a sufficient explanation. If you take the two men—one blond, blue-eyed, joyous, graceful, sympathetic, and one dark, brooding, with deep-set, inscrutable eyes, irregular in his movements, abstracted and proud—and put them into garments of the same stuff and the same cut, you will have an illustration of the difference between Gottfried's "*Tristan*" and Wolfram's "*Parzival.*" The change of spirit and atmosphere is so marked, that one need not be a critical scholar to feel it. I have quoted the opening lines of the former epic: now take the opening of "*Parzival*":

Ist zwîvel herzen nâhgebûr,	Is doubt a neighbor to the heart,
daz muoz der sêle werden sûr?	That to the soul must be a smart?
gesmaehet unde gezieret	Disgrace and honor bide
ist, swâ sich parrieret	As equals, side by side,
unverzaget mannes muot,	In the strong man and bold,
als agelestern varwe tuot.	Like magpie's hue twofold.
der mac dennoch wesen geil,	Yet may he joyful be,
wand' an ime sint beidin teil	When unto both sides free,
des himeles und der helle.	To heaven and to hell.
der unstaete geselle	But when he's false and fell,
hât die swarzen varwe gar,	Then black's his hue in verity.
und wirt och nâh der vinster var:	And near to darkness standeth he:
sô habet sich an die blanken	So he who steadfast is, and right,
der mit staetén gedanken,	Holds only to the color white.

diz fliegénde bîspel	This flying parable, I wis
ist tumben liuten gar ze snel,	Too fast for silly people is ;
sine mugen's niht erdenken ;	They cannot come the meaning nigh,
wand' ez kan vor in wenken	Since it before their minds will fly,
rehte alsam ein schelles hase.	Even as flies a frightened hare.

Here we feel, in the very first words, the presence of a metaphysical or rather psychological element: the sense is compact, and the lines move as if with a different step, although the measure is the same as in "*Tristan.*" There are none of those sparkling epithets which entice us on from point to point; but, on the other hand, we feel the touch of a grave and lofty intelligence, to whom the thought is more than its external form. In Wolfram the poetic nature seems to move forward centuries, at a single stride; but the poetic art fails to keep pace with it. Even the language no longer seems the same: the construction is unnecessarily forced, uneven, and impresses us like a different dialect, until we perceive that it is only the dialect of an individual mind, our insight into which will furnish us the key.

The name is our English Percival, and the hero is that knight of Arthur's Round Table, who alone saw the Holy Grail, after the transfiguration of Sir Galahad which Tennyson describes in the second of his last volume of Idylls. A Provençal poem by Guiot, and the French legend of "*Chrétien de Troyes*" seem to have been Wolfram's chief authorities for the story; but he has

amplified and enriched it, not like Gottfried in "*Tristan*," for the delight of picturesque narrative, but with reference to the spiritual symbolism which pervades it. The search for the Holy Grail—the *San Graal*—the cup from which Christ drank at the last supper with his disciples, is one of the most mysteriously beautiful legends of the Middle Ages. Galahad, whom Tennyson has celebrated, is not mentioned by Wolfram. The story, as he tells it in "*Parzival*," is so rich in details, that I cannot take time to repeat them: the rudest outline must suffice.

The poem commences with the adventures of Gamuret of Anjou, the father of Parzival, who, after becoming King of Wales and Norway and marrying Queen Herzeleide, dies in Bagdad. The sorrowing Queen retires into the desert of Soltane, and brings up Parzival as a peasant-boy. When he grows up and sees the gay knights riding by, he begs leave to go out and seek adventures, and his mother finally consents, but puts on him a fool's cap and bells. After overcoming various knights, he reaches Arthur's court, but is not yet admitted to the Round Table. An old knight, named Gurnemanz, teaches him knightly manners, and sends him forth with the caution not to ask many questions. He rescues the Queen Condwiramur from King Clamide of Brandigan, marries her and becomes King of Brobarz. On his way to visit his mother, after these events, he comes to a castle beside a lake. The King,

with four hundred knights, sits at a table in a splendid hall, and all are fed by the miraculous power of the Holy Grail, which the Queen places upon the table. The King bleeds from a wound, and the knights are overcome with sorrow, but Parzival, who is most hospitably treated, asks no question. On leaving, he learns, too late, that he has been in Monsalvälsche, the castle of the Grail, and should have asked the King the cause of his wound. Soon after this, Arthur, who has heard of Parzival's wonderful exploits, leaves his capital of Carduel to seek him. After fighting, *incognito*, with several, he is recognized by Gawain, and becomes a member of the Round Table.

Several books are devoted to the adventures of both Parzival and Gawain, in their search for the Grail. Neither finds it, but both perform wonders of bravery, strength and self-denial. Toward the close, without any apparent reason for the preference given, or the sudden change of destiny, a sorceress announces to Parzival, at Arthur's table, that he has been chosen King of the Grail. He thereupon goes to the lost castle, heals the former King, by asking him the cause of his wound, and declares his son Lohengrin,—who afterward, as the Knight of the Swan, becomes the hero of a romantic legend,—King of Wales, Norway, Anjou and several other countries.

This is a very insufficient sketch of the story, but the episodes are so attached to each other, by the associated

fates of the different characters, that they cannot easily be separated. The author's peculiar genius is manifested in every part, and thus the work has a spiritual coherence which distinguishes it from all other epics of the age. Parzival is not a mere form of action—a doer of deeds, like Hartmann's *Erek;* or a heroic lover, like Gottfried's *Tristan:* he is a pure, noble, aspiring soul, and the Grail is to him the symbol of a loftier life. Many scholars, indeed, consider that he represents the life of the spirit, and Gawain the life of the world, and they have found a more pervading and elaborate allegorical character in the work than, I think, was ever intended by its author. But in regard to the tendency of his genius, we cannot be mistaken.

I must confess that the more I study the poem, the more I find a spiritual meaning shining through its lines. The perfect innocence and purity of Parzival, as a boy, are wonderfully drawn: the doubts of his age of manhood, the wasted years, the trouble and gloom which brood over him, suggest a large background of earnest thought; and, although the symbolism of the Holy Grail may not be entirely clear, it means at least this much—that peace of soul comes only through Faith and Obedience. Like Tennyson's Galahad, Wolfram seems to say, in *Parzival:*

> "I muse on joy that will not cease,
> Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
> Pure lilies of eternal peace,
> Whose odors haunt my dreams."

To Wolfram von Eschenbach, the external shows of life were but disguises through which he sought to trace the action of the moral and spiritual forces which develop the human race. His psychological instincts were too profound for a simple tale of knightly adventure; he was not enough of a literary artist to arrange his conceptions of man's nature into a symmetrical form, and then to represent them completely through his characters; and thus we find, in "*Parzival*," a struggle between the two elements—between thought and language, between idea and action. This peculiarity is at first a disturbance to the reader, but it does not prevent him from feeling the latent, underlying unity of the work.

The parting of Queen Herzeleide from her son Parzival is one of the simpler passages, yet even here we find some of Wolfram's characteristic expressions:

Der knappe tump unde wert
iesch von der muoter dicke ein pfert.
daz begûnde se in ir herzen klagen.
sie dâhte "i'n wil im niht versagen:
éz muoz âber vil boese sîn."
do gedâhte mêr diu künegîn,
" der liute vil bî spotte sint.
tôren kleider sol mîn kint
ob sîme liehten lîbe tragen.
wirt er geroufet unt geslagen,

The boy, silly yet brave indeed,
Oft from his mother begged a steed.
That in her heart did she lament:
She thought: "him must I make content,
Yet must the thing an evil be."
Thereafter further pondered she:
" The folk are prone to ridicule.
My child the garments of a fool
Shall on his shining body wear.
If he be scoffed and beaten there,

sô kumet er mir her wider wol."
ôwê der jaemerlîchen dol!
diu frouwe nam ein sactuoch:
sie sneit im hemede unde bruoch,
daz doch an éime stücke erschein,
unz enmitten an sîn blankez bein.
daz wart für tôren kleit erkant,
sîn gugel man obene drûfe vant.
al frisch rûch kelberîn
von einer hût zwei riballîn
nâch sînen beinen wart gesniten.
dâ wart grôz jâmer niht vermiten.
din künegîn wâs alsô bedâht,
sie bat beliben in die naht.
"dune solt niht hinnen kêren,
ich wil dich list ê lêren.
an ungebanten strâzen,
soltu túnkel fürte lâzen:
die sîhte unde lûter sîn,
dâ solte al balde rîten în.
du solt dich site nieten,
der werelde grüezen bieten.
op dich ein grâ wise man
zuht wil lêrn als er wol kan,
dem soltu gerne volgen,
und wis im niht erbolgen.
sun, lâ dir bevolhen sîn,
swa du gûotes wîbes vingerlîn
mügest erwerben unt ir gruoz,
daz nim: ez tuot dir kumbers buoz.

Perchance he'll come to me again."
Ah, me, how wretched was her pain!
The dame a piece of sackcloth seeks,
And cuts therefrom a shirt and breeks,
That both in one they seem to be,
And reach below to the white knee.
For a fool's dress known was that,
And up above a pointed hat.
Then from a fresh, rough heifer's hide
Stuff for two shoes did she divide,
And cut them so to fit his feet;
And still her dole was great.
The Queen considered all aright,
And bade him tarry over night.
"Hence not sooner shalt thou go,
Ere I to thee shall wisdom show.
Shun untraveled road:
Leave dark ways untrode;
If they are sure and fair,
Enter and journey there.
Strive to be courteous then,
Offer thy greeting to men.
If thee a gray wise man
Duty will teach, as well he can,
Willingly follow his rede,
And anger him not with deed.
Son, be advised this thing:
If thou a good dame's ring
And her greeting may'st win to thee,
Take: and thy troubles shall lighter be.

du solt z'ir kusse gahen	Hasten to kiss her face,
und ir lîp vast' umbevâhen :	And to clasp her in firm embrace ;
daz gît gelücke und hôhen muot,	For, when she is good and pure,
op sie kiusche ist unde guot."	'Twill good luck and courage insure."

As a specimen of his descriptive style, I will quote some lines from the fifth book, where, in the magic castle of Monsalvälsche, the Queen, *Repanse de Schoie*, brings the Holy Grail to the King's table:

Sie nîgen. ir zwúo do truogen dar	They bowed. Then twain of them did bear
ûf die tavelen wol gevar	The silver to the tables fair
daz silber, unde leiten'z nider.	Full carefully, and there did place :
dô giengen sie mit zühten wider	And they returned with modest grace
zuo den êrsten zwelven sân.	To the first twelve within the hall.
ob i 'z geprüevet rehte hân,	If I have rightly counted all,
hie sulen ahzéhen frouwen stên.	Must there now eighteen ladies be.
âvoy nu siht man sehse gên	Behold ! six others next we see,
in wacte die man tiure galt :	All clad in cloth men precious hold :
daz was halbez plîalt,	The stuff was half of silk and gold,
daz ander pfell' von Ninnivê.	Muslin of Nineveh the rest.
dise unt die êrsten sehse ê	These, and the first six, thus were drest
truogén zwelf röcke geteilet,	Alike in mantles two-fold wrought,
gein tiwerr kost geveilet.	And for a heavy treasure bought.

näch den kom din künegîn.
ir antlitze gap den schîn,
sie wânden alle ez wolde tagen.
man sach die maget an ir tragen
pfêllêl von Arâbî.
ûf einem grüenen achmardî
truve sie den wunsch von pár-
dîs,
bêde wurzeln unde rîs.
daz was ein dinc, daz hiez der
Grâl,
erden wunsches überwal.
Repanse de schóyé sie hiez,
die sich der grâl tragen liez.
der grâl was von söliher art :
wol muose ir kiusche sîn be-
wart,
diu sîn ze rehte solde pflegen :
diu muose valsches sich bewe-
gen.
Vóreme grâle kômen lieht :
diu wârn von armer koste niht ;
sehs glas lanc lûter wol getân,
dar inne balsam der wol bran.
dô sie kômen von der tür
ze rehter mâze alsus her für,

Now after them advanced the
Queen,
With countenance of so bright
a sheen,
They all imagined day would
dawn.
One saw, the maiden was clothed
on
With muslin stuffs of Araby.
On a green silken cushion she
The pearl of Paradise did bear,
Complete,—root, branch, begin-
ning, end,—
The Grail it was, all-glorious,
fair,
Beyond perfection Earth can
lend.
Repanse de Schoie, so runs the
tale,
Was name of her that bore the
Grail ;
And so its nature did endure,
That she who bore it must be
pure,
Of just and perfect heart, and
strong
To frighten falsehood, sin and
wrong.
Before the Grail there came a
light,
The worth whereof was nothing
slight :
Six cups of dazzling crystal held
A burning oil that balm dis-
pelled.
Now when, in proper order,
all,
Entering, had traversed the high
hall,

mit zühten neic diu künegîn	The Queen bowed down with modest grace,
und al diu juncfröuwelîn	And the six maidens bowed the face,
die dâ truogen balsemvaz.	Who bore the cups of burning balm.
diu künegîn vâlschœite laz	The blameless Queen, proud, pure and calm,
sazte fur den wirt den grâl.	Before the host put down the Grail;
diz maere giht daz Parzivâl	And Percival, so runs the tale,
dicke an sie sach unt dâhte,	To gaze upon her did not fail,
diu den grâl dâ brâhte.	Who thither bore the Holy Grail.

I have chosen those passages which illustrate Wolfram's manner as a poet, especially as compared with Gottfried's. We have no means of estimating the influence of either upon his day and generation. Gottfried's allusion indicates that there were rival audiences as well as authors, and, since we find the critics divided now, we may well believe that there was greater diversity of opinion then. Wolfram's adherents would be among the thinkers, who were then rapidly increasing in number; Gottfried's among the men of refinement and education. The latter may be called the literary ancestor of Wieland; but Wolfram's lineal descendant, with a long line of generations between, was Goethe.

Neither of the other two epics of Wolfram—"*Willehalm*" and "*Titurel*"—was completed: the latter was barely begun, at the time of his death. The "*Willehalm*" celebrates the adventures of Wilhelm von Orange,

of Provence, the son of the Count of Narbonne, in his wars with the heathens. He undoubtedly followed a Provençal original in this, as in "*Parzival*," and was perhaps led to the theme by his admiration of Wilhelm's character. "*Titurel*" is an outgrowth from "*Parzival*": the same characters appear. It is written in a different metre, and shows, in the fragment which remains, a greater force and fluency of expression. Although the length of the last line interferes with the movement of the verses, it is easy to see how much more freely the author's thought carries itself, without losing anything of its subtlety and suggestiveness. I quote a few stanzas from the conversation of the two lovers, Schionatulander and Sigune:

Sigune says:

" Ich weiz wol, du bist lands unt liute grôziu frouwe;
des enger ich alles niht, wan daz dîn herze dur dîn ouge schouwe,
alsô daz ez den kumber mîn bedenke:
nu hilf mir schiere, ê daz dîn minn mîn herze und die fröude verkrenke."

" I know full well that thou of lands and people art the Queen;
I seek not that, so through thine eyes thy heart be seen,
So that it doth perceive my weight of sorrow;
Then help me now, ere heart and love a deeper trouble borrow!

The Queen answers:

" Swer sô minne hât, daz sîn minne ist gevaere
deheime als lieben friunde, als du mir bist, daz wort ungebaere

" If one hath such a love that danger therein be,
The unfitting word, to friend so dear as thou to me,

wirt von mir nimêr benennet minne:
Got weiz wol, daz ich nie bekande minnen flust, noch ir gewinne.

I ne'er will name with name of love or lover:
For, knoweth God, love's loss or gain I never did discover.

"Minne, ist daz ein Er? maht du minn mir diuten?
Ist daz ein Sie? Kumet mir minn, wie sol ich minne getriuten?
Muoz ich sie behalten bî den tocken?
Od fliuget minne ungerne ûf hant durh die wilde? ich kan minn wol locken."

"For love, is it a He? Canst give solution just?
Is it a She? So come it, how shall I dare trust?
Must love with dolls be left, and childish rapture?
Or flieth it out of hand in the woods? I surely can recapture."

Here you will notice, not only the expression of the feeling, but also the tendency to speculate upon its nature, which is a peculiarity of Wolfram von Eschenbach. It is not too much to say that he was the only profound thinker among the German authors of the Middle Ages.

Wolfram takes the same delight in many-syllabled geographic names, as Milton; and there are many of his lines which ring with the same half-barbaric music as the latter's "Aspramont and Montalban." He is an unlettered minstrel, with great qualities in the rough; a man of high aims and noble aspirations, struggling with insurmountable limitations, and missing real greatness on account of them. In Gottfried's case, we have everything but the original quality of intellect; but Wolfram, having that, misses the clear and harmonious form which must be added, chiefly through the want of the

culture which Gottfried possessed. Could the two have been united in one individual, Germany would have had her great mediæval poet, the equal of Dante.

But the epithet *great* must be denied to this courtly literature. The influence of the church and of classic learning, though greatly weakened, was still too powerful to permit a positive departure from previous paths of thought. The new wine was poured into old bottles, but it was not quite strong enough to burst them. So, these epics remain as priceless illustrations of the growth of the German mind during the Middle Ages, of the long fermentation which clarified into purity and flavor centuries afterward, not immortal in their own solitary right, but from the circumstances out of which they grew. Add to them the lyric poetry of the Minnesingers, and we are astonished at the productiveness of the age. From this point we must date the commencement of a national culture; for much of the great work of Charlemagne had been undone in the three centuries between him and the Hohenstaufens. If the literature of the latter period failed of its immediate and full effect, through the re-intervention of political and ecclesiastical causes, it was none the less a basis of achievement upon which the race thenceforth stood; and if we could read the secrets of History, we should perhaps find that the harp preserved for Germany a better possession than was lost to her by the sword.

IV.

THE NIBELUNGENLIED.

We now come to that other literary element of the Middle Ages, which is of earlier origin than the courtly epics, but which only assumed its present form about the time when they were produced. I have called it the epic poetry of the People, because, more than anything else in the literature of the human race—not even excepting the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey"—it has the character of a growth rather than a composition. We may guess when its growth began; we can very nearly determine the time when that growth ended; but there our knowledge stops. By whom, or under what circumstances, the first legends came into being,—how they were kept alive, increased, transformed with each generation—who took the rude, shapeless, separated parts, and united them in one grand, coherent form,—are questions which cannot be positively answered.

The more carefully we study the "*Nibelungenlied*" and its history, the more we are impressed with its exceptional character. Unnoticed in the records of the ages; ignored, perhaps contemptuously disparaged by the minstrelsy of the courts; kept alive only through the inherited fondness of the masses for their old tra-

ditions, it has been almost miraculously preserved to us, to be now appreciated as the only strong, original creation of the youth of the German race.

The fact that we find in the "*Nibelungenlied*" traces of the ancient mythology, with various incidents which are given in the earliest prose Edda of the Scandinavians, together with characters taken from the most stirring history of the *Völkerwanderung*, or Migration of the Races, proves the antiquity of the material. But the anachronism of making Theodoric the Great, the Gothic King of Italy, and Attila, King of the Huns, contemporaries, also gives us a clue to the probable time when the two elements began to be fused together. Attila died in 453, and Theodoric in 526. The uneducated mass of people would soon forget dates, and confuse the events of former generations; but some little time must be allowed to elapse before this could take place. The "oldest inhabitants" must first die, before the united legends could be publicly recited without their accuracy being disputed by some grey-haired listener. We can hardly assume that the first blending of the different elements took place before the year 600, or much later than a century afterward. It is most probable that the collection made by Charlemagne included all that was in existence in his day; but, that collection being lost, we are left without any record of the growth or changing character of the legend, until the tenth century.

First of all, I must recall to your memory the features of the migration of the tribes. The commencement of this remarkable historical episode is usually fixed about the year 375, in which year the Huns, coming from Central Asia, and first overcoming the Alans, between the Volga and the Don, broke up the ancient kingdom of the Goths, and started them on their wanderings westward. The Ostrogoths had up to that time possessed the country between the Don and the Dniester, in Southern Russia, and the Visigoths, all the region north of the Danube, as far westward as the river Theiss, in Hungary. Gradually pressing westward, and driving the other tribes, including the original Germanic races, before them, the Huns, then under Attila, were finally arrested by the great battle near Chalons-sur-Marne, where they were defeated by the Romans under Aëtius and the Visigoths under Theodoric I. This was in the year 451, and two years later Attila died. The Visigoths, under Alaric, had already invaded Italy in 402, but ten years later they passed through Southern Gaul into Spain. The Ostrogoths, on the contrary, did not reach Italy until 488, under Theodoric the Great, who made Verona his capital, and is therefore called, in the German legends Dietrich von Bern. After Theodoric's death, the kingdom existed for a few years, but finally ceased about 554, and the Gothic blood mixed itself with that of the Lombards, the Helvetians and the Germans, losing all distinctive national character.

The Burgundians, who were a Germanic race, inhabiting the region between the Vistula and the Oder, in Prussia, were also driven to west and south in the general movement, and first settled, eighty thousand men strong, in Gaul, between Geneva and Lyons. Here they became Arian Christians in the space of eight days, seven days being allowed for conversion and one for baptism. Sidonius Apollinarius describes them as men from six to seven feet high, clothed in the skins of beasts, and valuing their freedom as the highest possession. When Attila entered Gaul in 451, the Burgundian King Gundicar (supposed to be the Gunther of the "*Nibelungenlied*") opposed his march with ten thousand warriors, but all were slain after a long and heroic defense. The tribe finally moved northward, and occupied the country from the Rhine westward, including the present French province of Burgundy.

This is all of the great migratory movement which we require to know, in reading the "*Nibelungenlied;*" the other elements embodied in it are either taken from the same source as the older Scandinavian Edda, or were added as the story was transmitted from mouth to mouth for centuries. Lachmann, who devoted a great deal of labor to the examination of the existing manuscripts and their chronological character, as derived from the language, has fixed upon twenty lays, or separate chapters of the poem, as being of an ancient origin; the remaining nineteen he considers as addi-

tions made about the close of the twelfth century, for the purpose of uniting the whole into one consistent story. He states that there were two, if not more, attempts to perform this difficult task, without counting the previous changes which he thinks the original lays must have undergone in the course of several centuries. About one hundred and eighty years after the close of this mediæval period of German literature, printing was invented, and one of the earliest native works which was transferred from manuscript to type was Wolfram von Eschenbach's "*Parzival.*" The "*Nibelungenlied*" seems to have been already forgotten by the people; and not until the year 1751 was a part of it published by Bodmer, in Zurich, under the title of "Chriemhild's Revenge." The first complete republication of the entire epic was made by Müller in 1782. Afterward, Lachmann and the Brothers Grimm made careful comparisons of the three complete manuscripts, and it now appears to be settled that the oldest is that of Munich, the next that of St. Gall—although there are but a few years' difference between them, either way—and the latest, that belonging to Baron von Lassberg. This last is the most complete, but appears to be the least authentic. The Munich manuscript is generally attributed to the great unknown, who conceived the idea of creating an epic unity out of the scattered material,—an idea which he carried out with wonderful power and skill, and so nearly achieved the highest

success that we wonder how he should have fallen short of it.

Since Lachmann, however, other scholars have taken up the study of the poem with the fresher and keener knowledge of our day. Zarncke, Bartsch, and last of all, Hermann Fischer, have applied to it the tests of philological and metrical criticism; and the chief result is that the belief which was so long entertained—which suggested to the Greek scholar Wolff his celebrated Homeric theory—that it was the production of many authors, combined and thrown into a symmetrical form by some poetic editor, has been generally given up. It is now admitted that the greater portion of the poem was the work of one author, who took the chief incidents of the story from a version of the popular legend, written by order of Bishop Piligrim of Passau, somewhere about the year 980. The time when the "*Nibelungenlied*," in its present form, was written, has also been approximately fixed. It could not have been earlier than 1130, nor later than 1180: thus it precedes the romantic epics by a few years.

One of the early Minnesingers, who was called "the Kürenberger," has left behind him fifteen detached stanzas, written in the measure of the "*Nibelungenlied*." It is conjectured that he was either Magnus or Konrad von Kürenberg, who were natives of Upper Austria, and the German critics incline more and more to the belief that we must accept him as the great poet of the Middle

Ages, hitherto unknown. Fischer asserts that the "*Nibelungenlied*" was either originally written, or carefully revised and polished, about the year 1170, and that it was intended to be recited at courts, and heard by noble auditors. It is quite certain that between the years 1190 and 1200, the poem was reproduced in two different copies, one of which, called the "*Vulgata*," addressed itself to the common people. The aristocratic version had but a short life, if indeed any life: the taste of courts preferred the epics based on the Arthurian legends. But the people gratefully accepted and cherished their version, and for one hundred and fifty years the few fragments of their poetry which survive, betray its influence.

If you remember the bareness and bluntness of the "*Hildebrandslied*"—the simple means by which strong effects are produced—you will understand the original character of the "*Nibelungenlied*," which is still preserved through all the changes of language. But with this simplicity of diction, it is richer in incident than the "Iliad." The stage is crowded with characters; for the union of three legendary cycles in one work, which shall combine the best features of all, has resulted in a condensation which excludes the prolific description and sentiment of the courtly epics. There are not quite 10,000 lines, instead of the 20,000 of Gottfried or Hartmann. Certain forms of expression are repeated, as in their poems, but the action varies with each *Aventiure*,

or adventure, of the thirty-nine, and the poem closes as abruptly as it begins. Carlyle says, with entire truth: "The unknown singer of the '*Nibelungen*,' though no Shakespeare, must have had a deep poetic soul. . . . His poem, unlike so many old and new pretenders to that name, has a basis and an organic structure, a beginning, middle and end; there is one great principle and idea set forth in it, round which all its multifarious parts combine in living union. Remarkable it is, moreover, how along with this essence and primary condition of all poetic virtue, the minor external virtues of what we call taste, and so forth, are, as it were, presupposed: and the living soul of Poetry being there, its body of incidents, its garment of language, come of their own accord."

Now let us take up the "*Nibelungenlied*," in the form it wore, at the end of the twelfth century. It may be so easily read, that I have never been able to see the necessity of the translations into modern German. This is the opening stanza:

Uns ist in alten maeren | wunders vil geseit
von heleden lobebaeren, | von grôzer arebeit,
von fröuden, hôchgeziten, | von weinen und von klagen;
von küener recken strîten | muget ir nu wunder hoeren sagen.

We find in ancient story | wonders many told,
Of heroes of great glory, | of spirit strong and bold;
Of joyances and high-tides, | of weeping and of woe,
Of strife of gallant fighters, | mote ye now many wonders know.

You will notice that the measure is peculiar. Each

line is divided by a cæsural pause so marked that there is a space left between the words to indicate it. The first half of the line has three iambic feet, with a redundant syllable; the latter half three feet, except in the closing line of the stanza, where it occasionally has four. The measure varies in effect, sometimes bold and strong, with a fine irregularity of movement, sometimes sweet and musical, but frequently rough and halting, and it requires some familiarity before it adjusts itself to the ear. Yet how near it came to a noble rhythmical form may be seen from those ballads of Uhland, wherein he has taken the same metrical principle, and simply given it regularity. Take the opening of his historical Suabian ballads, for instance:

"Ist denn im Schwabenlande verschollen aller Sang," etc.
Are then the Suabian valleys, by sounds of song unstirred,
Where once so clear on Staufen the knightly harp was heard,
And why, if Song yet liveth, proclaim not now its chords
The deeds of hero-fathers, the clash of ancient swords?

Or take the opening of Macaulay's "Horatius," throw two lines into one, and you have the same measure:

"Lars Porsena of Clusium, by the nine gods he swore
That the great house of Tarquin should suffer wrong no more."

The second stanza of the "*Nibelungen*" is:

Ez wuohs in Bûrgónden | ein vil édel magedin,
daz in allen landen | niht schoeners mohte sîn,

There once was in Burgundy | a maid of high degree,
That in all lands and countries | no fairer might there be;

Kriemhilt geheizen: | si wart ein scoene wîp.	A lovely woman was she, | Chriemhild was she hight,
dar umbe muosen degene | vil verlîesen den lîp.	For her sake many swordsmen | must lose their lives in fight.

Thus simply the theme opens. Chriemhild the fair and Brunhild the dark are the heroines; Siegfried the Strong, Gunther and Hagen, Attila and Theodoric the heroes. The sagas of the Niblungs and the gods Odin and Loki, the marches of the Huns and Goths, magic and human passion, love and hate, are now mixed together in a wild, fierce and fateful story, which yet does not soar so high as to lose its hold on the general sympathies of men.

At the same time with the fair Burgundian maiden, lived in the Netherlands Siegfried, the son of King Siegemund and Queen Siegelinde. He is synonymous with the Sigurd of Scandinavian saga, the fair, strong young knight who overcomes men, giants and dragons. When he has reached the proper age, Siegfried is knighted; then, refusing to accept his father's sceptre, he goes to Worms, where Chriemhild lives under the care of her three brothers, Gunther, Gernot and Geiselher. He does not see the famous beauty until after he has conquered the Saxons and Danes, and brought the Danish King Lindegast captive to Worms: then he is presented to her, she thanks him, and he is permitted to give her a kiss. He asks Gunther for her hand, which is promised to him on condition that he will accompany

the latter to Iceland and assist him in his wooing of Queen Brunhild. Gunther's uncle, Hagen, who afterward becomes the evil genius of the story, and the knight Dankwart accompany them. The enterprise would have failed had not Siegfried possessed a *tarnkappe*, or cap which rendered the wearer invisible, and the sword Balmung of marvelous power. Besides, he had bathed in the fat of a dragon which he had slain, and was invulnerable except in a small spot, between the shoulders, where a linden-leaf had fallen upon him as he bathed.

The amazon Brunhild fights with Gunther, but is really vanquished by the invisible Siegfried. The latter then steers to the land of the Niblungs, takes possession of a great treasure, or hoard, which he had previously won in a fight with giants, and returns to Iceland with a thousand of the Nibelungen warriors, as Gunther's escort when he carries Brunhild to Worms. When the two are married, Siegfried also receives the hand of Chriemhild. He assists Gunther again in overcoming the magical strength of Brunhild, and gives the amazon's girdle and ring to his wife, together with the "*Nibelungenhort*." To this treasure a curse is attached, and an evil fate follows its possessor.

Siegfried and Chriemhild rule for ten years as King and Queen of the Netherlands; then, with a large retinue of Nibelungen warriors, they pay a visit to Worms, at the invitation of King Gunther. After the first splen-

did festivities, a strife for precedence arises between Chriemhild and Brunhild: the two queens meet at the door of the cathedral, and each insists on entering first. Brunhild claims that Siegfried is Gunther's vassal; Chriemhild retorts by asserting that Siegfried, not Gunther, overcame her rival in Iceland, and produces the ring and the girdle in proof. The two kings, who are summoned by their wives, endeavor to compose the quarrel; but the uncle Hagen goes secretly to Brunhild, and promises to revenge her. Externally there is peace again, but the elements of ruin are at work. Hagen now goes to Chriemhild, professes to be a friend, and offers to watch over Siegfried, in case Brunhild should attempt any secret revenge. Chriemhild is deceived by the old traitor: she tells him of the vulnerable spot on Siegfried's back, where the linden-leaf lay, and even braids an ornament over the spot on his mantle, so that Hagen may know where to ward off a blow.

The catastrophe instantly follows. Siegfried is taken out to hunt by Gunther and Hagen, and in a moment of the gayest peace and confidence is treacherously slain. But Chriemhild's woes are not yet at an end: Siegfried's father returns in haste to his own land: Gunther persuades his sister to bring the "*Nibelungenhort*" to Worms, which is no sooner done than he seizes it by force, and its attending curse is thus transferred to his own house. It is not long before the three brothers, Gunther, Gernot and Geiselher, begin to quarrel about

the treasure, and finally Hagen sinks it in the Rhine, making each take an oath that he will not reveal the spot while either of the others is alive.

In the meantime the count Rüdiger comes to Worms to solicit Chriemhild's hand for Attila. She hesitates, until Rüdiger hints that she may in this way obtain her revenge for Siegfried's death; then, taking her brothers Gernot and Geiselher, she sets out for the Danube, reaches the land of the Huns, and is married to Attila. The account of the wedding in Vienna, of their life in Attila's castle, and Chriemhild's wise government are minutely described in the poem. She has a son who is named Ortlieb, she possesses the entire love and confidence of Attila, she is renowned among the Huns and in foreign lands, but the dream of vengeance never fades from her mind. Night and day she plans how to get possession of her uncle Hagen, her brother Gunther, and the Nibelungen treasure. Finally, in the thirteenth year of her marriage, she persuades Attila to send two minstrels to Burgundy, and invite the whole court to a grand high-tide, or festival, in the land of the Huns.

Hagen foresees danger, and counsels against accepting the invitation, but he is overruled. I must here explain that the Burgundians, after obtaining the treasure and its *Niblung* guardians, are thenceforth called "*Nibelungen*," and the poem, from this point to the end, was called the "*Nibelungennoth*"—need, extremity, or fate. The journey to the Danube, the crossing of that river

and the arrival of the Nibelungen at Attila's Court, are described in detail, with great spirit and picturesqueness. It is evident that the last author is on familiar ground: he mentions places which retain nearly the same names at the present day. As the march advances, the omens increase; even Theodoric appears and warns the Nibelungen of their coming danger. Hagen, whose part in these final lays is compared by some of the German critics to that of Cassandra in the "Iliad," now becomes grand in spite of his treachery. His fidelity to his friend Volker, the minstrel, his courage, his desperate bravery, his unshaken attitude of heroism, lift him beside Chriemhild into a splendid tragical prominence, beside which the other characters—Gunther, Attila, Theodoric and Hildebrand—sink into comparative indistinctness. Rüdiger, only, rises into prominence toward the close, as a man of singular honor and nobility of nature. But Hagen towers above all, grimmer and grander than Macbeth, in his defiance of the coming doom.

Attila, who knows nothing of Chriemhild's plans of vengeance, receives the Nibelungen kindly, and sleeps innocently during the night when her armed Huns are waiting the opportunity for murder, of which they are deprived by Hagen's watchfulness. In the morning, when the guests are dressing for mass in the cathedral, Hagen tells them: "Ye must take other garments, ye swordsmen, hauberks instead of silk shirts,

shields instead of mantles; and now, my masters dear, squires and men likewise, ye shall most earnestly go to church, and lay before the high God your sorrow and your dire extremity; for verily death is nigh unto us." At the royal feast in Attila's hall, the strife, instigated by Chriemhild, commences, and Hagen first strikes off the head of her son, Ortlieb. Then swords are drawn and murder is loose. Theodoric, with a mighty voice, attempts to stop the fray, but in vain; then he, Attila and Chriemhild withdraw. From this point to the end all is movement and passion; every incident is illuminated as by a fierce crimson light. No mere outline can do it the least justice. The Huns press into the hall, and all night there is naught but carnage, fire and the terrible noise of fighting. At last all are slain but Hagen and Gunther, both sorely wounded. They are bound by Theodoric, whose warriors, except Hildebrand, have shared the common fate, and are then brought before Chriemhild, who demands to know where they have sunk the "*Nibelungenhort.*" Hagen answers that he cannot tell while Gunther lives. The latter is instantly slain, and then the fierce old uncle says: "Now none knoweth of the hoard but God and I, and from thee, she-devil, shall it be forever hidden!" Thereupon Chriemhild seizes his own sword—the famous sword Balmung, which had once belonged to Siegfried—and strikes off his head. Attila laments his fate, but Hildebrand—the hero of the "*Hildebrandslied*"—slays the avenging

Chriemhild, and the poem closes, after this terrible night of slaughter, with these stanzas:

Hildebrant mit zorne | zuo Kriemhilde spranc,
er sluoc der Küneginne | einen swaéren swertes swanc.

jâ tet ir diu sorge | von Hildebrande wê,
waz mohte si gehelfen | daz si sô grüzlîchen scrê?

Dô was gelegen aller | dâ der reigen lîp.
ze stücken was gehouwen | dô daz edele wîp.
Dietrich und Etzel | weinen dô began:
si klageten inneclîche | beidin mâge unde man.

Diu vil michel êre | was dâ gelegen tôt.

die liute heten alle | jâmer unde nôt.
mit leide was verendet | des Küniges hôhgezît,
als je diu liebe leide | z'aller jüngíste gît.

I'ne kan iu niht bescheiden, | waz sider dâ geschach:
wan ritter unde vrouwen | weinen man dâ sach,
dar zuo die edelen knehte, | ir lieben friunde tôt.

hie hât daz maere ein ende: | daz ist der Nibelunge nôt.

Then Hildebrand in fury | to Chriemhild did go,
And struck the queen with falchion | a sore and heavy blow;
Of Hildebrand her terror | was more than she could hide,
But nothing did it help her | that there so miserably she cried.

Now slain were all that should be, | they lay withouten life,
And she was hewn to pieces, | and dead, that royal wife;
Theodoric and Attila | a weeping then began;
Sore was the lamentation | of maiden and of man.

Ah, how much was the splendor | which there lay dead and cold!
And fell on all the people | distress and woe untold;
In sorrow thus was ended | the high-tide of the King,
As after joy comes always | some sad and cruel thing.

I cannot tell you further | what happened of the tale,
Except that knights and ladies | were seen to weep and wail,
And eke the gallant swordsman, | whose dearest friends lay low.
And here the story endeth: | this is the Nibelungen woe.

Even from the very brief sketches of the courtly epics which I have given, you will be able to recognize how strongly the "*Nibelungenlied*" contrasts with them in plan, character and expression. The strong, large features of the old legends, both Gothic and Scandinavian, still look upon us from its lines; something of the rudeness, but also the power, of the early Bardic songs is felt in its measures; the Christian faith has been added, it is true, but without changing in any way the pagan virtues and vices of the original characters. Siegfried and Hagen are made of other flesh and blood than the love-stricken Tristan or the pure-souled Parzival. There are no fair descriptions of nature, no expressions of sentiment or emotion beyond the most necessary utterances. When Siegfried is treacherously slain, he only says: "I lament nothing upon the earth except Frau Chriemhild, my wife." "In poetry," says a critic, "the rude man requires only to see something going on; the man of a more refined nature wishes to feel; while the man of the highest culture asks that he shall be made to reflect." The "*Nibelungenlied*" fulfills the first of these conditions to the utmost: there is action, much of it of the most tremendous character, from beginning to end; and the stage, vast as it is, is always crowded with persons. But the second condition is not entirely neglected in the poem, as we now have it. The genius who moulded all its alien elements into such a grand unity may very well have added those slight, almost uncon-

scious touches which constantly appeal to our sympathy. Indeed the latter effect is most frequently produced where it is not planned beforehand, as we have seen in Hildebrand's words to his son Hadubrand, before they fight.

The action of the thirty-nine *Aventiures* is so continuous and so rich in details, that it is somewhat difficult to find brief illustrative passages. We must be satisfied with three specimens, not better than many others in the poem, but more easily detached from the context: the first is the meeting of Chriemhild and Siegfried, after the latter has defeated the Saxons and Danes:

Dô hiez der künec rîche | mit sîner swester gân,
die ir dienen solden, | wol hundert siner man,
ir und sîner mâge: | die truogen swert enhant.
daz was daz hovegesinde | vón der Búrgónden lant.

Then ordered for his sister | the King so rich and proud,
A hundred men of battle | unto her service vowed,
For her and for her mother, | a sword in every hand:
Such were the royal servants | in the Burgundian land.

Nu gie diu minnecliche | alsô der morgenrôt
tuot ûz den trüeben wolken. | dâ sciet von maneger nôt
der se dâ truog in herzen | und lange het getân:
er sach die minneclichen | nu vil hêrlîchen stân.

There came the fair and lovable | as comes the morning-glow
From clouds that would obscure it. | And gone was many a woe
From him who in his bosom | had yearned for her so long:
He saw her stand before him | in beauty bright and strong.

Jâ lûhte ir von ir waete | vil manec edel stein :
ir rôsenrôtiu varwe | vil minneclichen scein.
ob iemen wünscen solde, | der kunde niht gejehen
daz er ze dirre werelde | hete iht scoeners gesehen.

Upon her garment sparkled | full many a jewel-stone ;
Her rosiness of color | like purest love-light shone.
Whatever one might hope for, | yet now he must confess
That here on Earth could nothing | surpass her loveliness.

Sam der liehte mâne | vor den sternen stât,
des scin sô lûterliche | ab den wolken gât,
dem stuont si nu geliche | vor maneger frouwen guot.
des wart dâ wol gehoehet | den zieren heleden der muot.

Even as the shining full-moon | comes out before the stars,
So pure in powerful lustre | it melts the cloudy bars,
So verily she in beauty | before all ladies there :
And all the gay young heroes | were proud to see her fair.

Die richen kameraere | sah man vor in gân.
die hôhgemuoten degene | die 'n wolden daz niht lân,
sine drungen dâ sie sâhen | die minneclichen meit.
Sîvride dem herren | wart beide lieb únde leit.

Court-servants made a passage, | in glittering array,
The strong, courageous swordsmen | followed upon her way ;
And ever pressed and crowded | to see the maiden go.
Now this was unto Siegfried | a joy and yet a woe.

Er dâhte in sînem muote : | "wie kunde daz ergân
daz ich dich minnen solde ? | daz ist ein tumber wân.
sol aber ich dich vremeden, | sô waere ich sanfter tôt."
er wart von den gedanken | vil dicke bleich unde rôt.

Within his thought he pondered: | "How thought I, I was fain
With love of man to woo thee ? | It is a fancy vain :
And yet, should I avoid thee, | so were I earlier dead."
He grew, while thus a-thinking, | oft pale, and then how often red !

Dô stuont sô minneclîche | daz Sigemundes kint,
sam er entworfen waere | an ein pérmínt
von guotes meisters listen, | als man ime jach,
daz man helt deheinen | nie sô scœnén gesach.

They saw the son of Sieglind, | lover-like standing there,
As if he had been painted, | on parchment clear and fair,
By hand of some good master : | 'twas pleasant him to see,
For none so grand a hero | beheld before as he.

Dô sprach von Burgonden | der herre Gêrnôt :
" der iu sînen dienest | sô güetlîchen bôt,
Gunthér, vil lieber bruoder, | dem sult ir tuon alsam
vor allen disen recken : | des râts ich nimmer mich gescam.

Then swiftly spake Lord Gernot, | of the Burgundian land :
" To him who did us service | with such a mighty hand,
To him, dear brother Gunther, | now offer fitting pay
In presence of the warriors : | no man will scorn my say.

" Ir heizet Sîvrêden | zuo mîner swester kumen,
daz in diu maget grueze : | des habe wir immer frumen.
diu nie gegruozte recken, | diu sol in grüezen pflegen :
dâ mite wir haben gewunnen | den vil zierlîchen degen."

" Summon straightway Siegfried | unto our sister pure,
That so the maiden greet him : | 'twill bring us luck, be sure !
She who never greeted heroes | shall grace to him award,
And thereby we shall win us | the service of his sword."

Dô giengen 's wirtes mâge | dâ man den helt vant.
si sprachen zuo dem recken | ûzer Niderlant :
" iu hât der künec erloubet, | ir sult ze hove gân,
sîn swester sol iuch grüezen : | daz ist zen êren iu getân."

The King's friends, then advancing | where the hero still did stand,
Spake to the mighty warrior | from out the Netherland :
" The King's will hath permitted | that you to court repair ;
His sister there shall greet you : | this honor shall be your share."

Dér herre in sinem muote | was des vil gemeit.
dô truog er ime herzen | líeb âne leit,
daz er sehen solte | der scoenen Uoten kint.

mit minneclichen tugenden | si gruozte Sivriden sint.

The hero, gentle-hearted, | rejoiced to hear the word;
Love, free of doubt or torment, | in all his senses stirred,
With hope that Ute's daughter, | the fair one, he should see:
And she with gentle glances | received Siegfried full courteously.

Dô si den hôhgemuoten | vor ir stênde sach,
do erzunde sich sîn varwe. | diu scoene magt sprach:
" sît willekomen, her Sivrit, | ein edel ritter guot."
dô wart im von dem gruoze | vil wol gehoéhét der muot.

But when before her standing | she saw him bold and proud,
Like flame her color kindled: | the Fair One spake aloud:
" Be welcome here, Sir Siegfried, | a noble knight and true!"
And he from such a greeting | a higher courage drew.

Er neig ir flîzecliche; | bî der hénde si in vie.
wie rehte minnecliche | er bî der frouwen gie!

mit lieben ougen blicken | ein ander sahen an

der herre und ouch diu frouwe: | daz wart vil tougenlich getân.

He bowed to her full gently, | to thank her for her rede,
Then drew them towards each other | love's yearning and its need;
With eyes that shone more fondly | each then the other spied,
The hero and the maiden: | that glance they strove to hide.

Wart iht dâ friwentliche | getwungen wiziu hant,
von herzen lieber minne, | daz ist mir niht bekant.

If then some softer pressure | on her white hand might be,
Love's first and heart-sweet token— | it is unknown to me.

doch enkan ich niht gelouben | daz ez wurde lân :
si het im holden willen | kunt vil scíeré getân.

But yet believe I cannot | that they did not do so ;
For hearts of love desirous | were wrong to let it go.

Bî der sumerzîte | und gein des meijen tagen
dorft 'er in sîme herzen | nimmer mêr getragen
sô vil der hôhen vreude | denn' er dâ gewan,
dô im diu gie enhende | die er ze trûte wolde hân.

In the days of summer | and in the time of May,
He never in his bosom | again might bear away
So much of highest rapture | as in that hour he knew,
Seeing her walk beside him, | whom he so wished to woo.

Do gedahte manec recke: | "hey waer' mir sam gescehen,
daz ich ir gienge enhende, | sam ich in hân gesehen,
oder bî ze ligene ! | daz liez' ich âne haz."
ez gedíente noch nie recke | nach einer küneginne baz.

Then thought many a swordsman : — | "Ha ! if I were but thou
And I could walk beside her | as I see thee now,
Or, perhaps, embrace her— | I were ready, sure !"
Never served a swordsman | queen so good and pure.

Von swelher künege lande | die geste kômen dar,
die nâmen al geliche | niwan ir zweier war.
ir wart erloubet küssen | den waetlichen man :
im wart in dirre werlde | nie sô líebé getân.

And from whatever country | a guest was present there,
In the high hall was nothing | he looked on but this pair.
To her it was permitted | the gallant man to kiss :
In all his life he never | knew aught so dear as this.

Der Künec von Tenemarke | der sprach sâ zestunt :
" diss vil hôhen gruozes | lit maneger ungesunt,

Began the King of Denmark, | and these the words he spake :
" Sure, such a noble greeting | here many a wound doth make ;

des ich vil wol enpfinde, | von Sivrides hant.
got enlâze in nimmer mêre | komen in miniu künges lant."

As I around me notice, | and all from Siegfried's hand:
God grant he never travel | into my Danish land."

The whole chapter entitled "How Siegfried was slain," is an admirable piece of narrative, gay, bright, full of joyous action, until the hero is treacherously struck, when it becomes as simple as if told by a child. These are the concluding verses:

" Ir müget iuch lihte rüemen," | sprach dô Sîfrit.
" het ich an iu erkennet | den mortlichen sit,
ich hete wol behalten vor iu | nîmen lîp.
mich riuwet niht sô sêre | sô vrou Kriemhilt min wîp.

" You may lightly boast," said Siegfried | of the Netherland,
" But had I known your purpose, | against your murderous hand
Had I full well protected | my body and my life:
On earth I grieve for nothing | but Dame Chriemhild, my wife.

" Nu müeze got erbarmen | deich ie gewan den sun
dem man daz itewîzen | sol nâh den zîten tuon
daz sine mâge iemen | mortlîche hân erslagen,
möht' ich," sô sprach Sîfrit, | " daz sold' ich pilliche klagen."

" May also God take pity | on the boy I leave behind,
Who in all time henceforward | must hear the taunt unkind,
That his own friends his father | have murderously slain.
If I had time, with justice | I might of that complain."

Dô sprach vil jaemerliche | der verchwunde man:
" welt ir, künic edele, | triuwen iht begân

Then mournfully spake further | the hero nigh to death:
" O noble King, if ever | ye drew a faithful breath,

in der werlt an iemen, | lât iu bevolhen sîn
ûf íuwér genâde | die lieben triutinne mîn.

If ever kept ye pledges, | I do entreat ye here
To hold in grace and pity | my sweetheart fair and dear.

" Und lât si des geniezen | daz si iuwer swester sî.
durch aller fürsten tugende | wont ir mit triuwen bî.
mir müezen warten lange | mîn vater und mîne man.
ez enwart nie vrouwen leider | an liebem vrîundé getân."

" Let it to her be profit | that she's your sister still:
For every princely virtue | commands your faithful will.
For me my land and father | will long and vainly wait:
Never met any woman | from a dear spouse such bitter fate."

Die bluomen allenthalben | von bluote wâren naz.
dô rang er mit dem tôde: | unlange tet er daz,
want des tôdes wâfen | ie ze sêre sneit.
dô mohte reden niht mêre | der recke küen' unt gemeit.

The blossoms all around him | wet with his blood became:
With death he fiercely struggled, | not long he did the same;
The sword of death was on him | and cut him very sore;
And soon the noble warrior | could speak a word no more.

Dô die herren sâhen | daz der helt was tôt,
si leiten in ûf einen schilt, | der was von golde rôt,
und wurden des ze râte, | wie daz solde ergân
daz man ez verhaele | daz ez het Hagene getân.

Now when the lords beheld there | the hero pale and cold,
Upon a shield they laid him, | the which was red with gold.
Then they began to counsel | how further to proceed,
That none would learn the secret | that Hagen did the deed.

Dô sprâchen ir genuoge: | "uns ist übele geschehen.
ir sult ez heln alle | unt sult gelîche jehen,

After this wise spake many: | "An evil thing is done.
We'll hide it with a story, | and all shall say, as one,

da er rite jagen eine, | der Kriemhilde man,
in slüegen scâchaere, | dâ er füere durch den tan."

As he alone rode hunting, | this son of Siegmund's line,
The ruffian robbers slew him | among the woods of pine."

Dô sprach von Tronege Hagene: | "ich bringe'n in daz lant.
mir ist vil unmaere, | und wirt ez ir bekant',
diu sô hât betrübet | den Prünhilde muot.
ez ahtet mich vil ringe, | swaz si wéinéns getuot."

Then spake von Troneg Hagen: | "Him home myself will bear,
And if she learn who did it, | for that I shall not care.
Yea, she that vexed Brunhilde | before the people's eyes,
It will concern me little | if now she weeps and cries."

For the third specimen, I will take a passage which Mr. Carlyle has translated. When the Nibelungen come to the Danube, on their way to the Court of Attila and Chriemhild, they are at a loss how to cross the river. Hagen learns from the mermaids where to find the ferryman, and is ordered by them to call himself Amelrich, or he will not be allowed to enter the boat. When this has taken place, however, and the ferryman sees that it is not Amelrich whom he has taken on board, he wrathfully orders Hagen to leap on shore again:

"Nune tuot des niht," sprach Hagene: | "trurec ist min muot.
nemet von mir ze minne | ditze golt vil guot.

unt füert uns über tûsent ross | unt alsô manigen man."
dô sprach der grimme verge: | "daz wirdet nímmér getân."

"Now say not that," spake Hagen; | "Right hard am I bested.
Take from me, for good friendship, | this clasp of gold so red;
And row our thousand heroes | and steeds across this river."
Then spake the wrathful boatman, | "That will I surely never."

Er huop ein starkes ruoder, | michel unde breit,
er slûoc éz ûf Hagenen, | (des wart er ungemeit),
daz er in dem schiffe | strûchte ûf sîniu knie.
sô rehte grimmer verge | kom dem Tronegaere nie.

Then one of his oars he lifted, | right broad it was and long,
He struck it down on Hagen, | did the hero mickle wrong,
That in the boat he staggered, | and alighted on his knee;
Other such wrathful boatman | did never the Troneger see.

Dô wolde er baz erzürnen | den übermüeten gast:
er sluoc eine schalten, | daz diu gar zerbrast,
Hagenen über daz houbet: | er was ein starker man.
dâ von der Elsen verge | grôzen schaden dâ gewan.

His proud unbidden guest | he would now provoke still more;
He struck his head so stoutly | that it broke in twain the oar,
With strokes on head of Hagen; | he was a sturdy wight:
Nathless had Gelfrat's boatman | small profit of that fight.

Mit grîmmégem muote | greif Hagene zehant
vil balde z'einer scheiden, | da er ein wâfen vant.
er sluoc im ab daz houbet | und warf ez an den grunt.
diu maere wurden schiere | den stolzen Burgonden kunt.

With fiercely-raging spirit | the Troneger turned him round,
Clutch'd quick enough his scabbard, | and a weapon there he found;
He smote his head from off him, | and cast it on the sand:
Thus had that wrathful boatman | his death from Hagen's hand.

These passages, I am aware, will not avail to give an adequate representation of the whole tone and atmosphere of the poem. The attractive quaintness and artlessness of the old dialect, with its many curious

idiomatic phrases, cannot be preserved in our modern English, any more than the same fresh and racy flavor which we find in the older English of Chaucer and Spenser. Neither can the mere skeleton of the story, as I have been forced by want of space to give it, do justice to the many touches which constantly soften its gathering chronicles of slaughter. When Rüdiger, who obeys Attila's command with a heavy heart, and goes with his warriors to attack the Nibelungen in the fatal banquet-hall, gives his own shield to Hagen, to replace that which has been hacked to pieces, we are told that "many cheeks were red with weeping." Gernot and Geiselher beg Queen Chriemhild to spare their lives, for they were all nursed by one mother; but when she promises to do so if only Hagen, the murderer of Siegfried, be given up, the gallant Kings answer: "That can never be." There is the phantom of an implacable Fate behind all those dreadful deeds: the kings and warriors clearly see the coming doom, and they meet it like heroes. At the close, we have forgotten the perfidy of Hagen, the fury of Chriemhild, the meanness of Gunther, the weakness of Attila, and are ready to join in that general lamentation which indiscriminately mourns all the slain.

If the historical tradition of the Burgundian King Gundicar and his ten thousand warriors falling before Attila's march into France, be the exaggerated form of an actual occurrence, this may be one of the bases of the

"*Nibelungenlied.*" The other and earlier basis is Scandinavian saga, not history,—or history in mythological disguise. The only other facts are that Attila's first wife, named Herka, is certainly the Halke of the epic; while an ancient Hungarian chronicle, of somewhat doubtful character, speaks of his second wife as Kriemheilch. Theodoric and Hildebrand are anachronisms, not to be explained by the supposition that the former is intended for the Visigoth, Theodoric I. This is the slender root of fact to which hangs the wonderful growth of so many centuries.

If I have not been able to prove it to you, in this brief space, I trust that I have at least indicated why the "*Nibelungenlied*" may be one of the most remarkable poems ever written. It is one of the oldest epics of our race. But when the enthusiastic German scholar calls it a Gothic Iliad, he uses an epithet which only confuses our ideas. It has neither the unity nor the nobility of style which we find in Homer. There is the same difference as between a Druid circle of huge granite boulders, although overgrown with ivy and wild blossoms and encircled by a forest of Northern pine, and a symmetrical marble temple on a sunny headland beside the blue sea. The world has fallen into a bad habit of naming everything after something else. Let us call the Greek epic the "*Iliad,*" and the old German epic of the people nothing else but the "*Nibelungenlied.*"

In regard to that unknown man, whose genius, in the

thirteenth century, sealed and transmitted to us the precious inheritance, I cannot do better than repeat Carlyle's words: "His great strength is an unconscious, instinctive strength; wherein truly lies his highest merit. The whole spirit of Chivalry, of Love and heroic Valor must have lived in him and inspired him. Everywhere he shows a noble sensibility; the sad accents of parting friends, the lamentings of women, the high daring of men, all that is worthy and lovely prolongs itself in melodious echoes through his heart. A true old Singer, and taught of Nature herself! Neither let us call him an inglorious Milton, since now he is no longer a mute one. What good were it that the four or five letters composing his name could be printed, and pronounced with absolute certainty? All that is mortal in him is gone utterly: of his life, and its environment, as of the bodily tabernacle he dwelt in, the very ashes remain not: like a fair, heavenly Apparition, which indeed he *was*, he has melted into air, and only the Voice he uttered, in virtue of its inspired gift, yet lives and will live."

It is difficult to ascertain, at this distance of time, whether any stimulus was given to the popular forms of poetry in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries by the poetry of the courts; but the latter certainly gave license —which, in literature, is life,—to the former. The same phenomena, of course, would be found in both circles. Even as the renown of Walther, Wolfram, Gottfried and

Hartmann would call into life a host of inferior minstrels, so the popularity of the "*Nibelungenlied*" would inspire imitations, rival epics, based, like itself, on older lays, and even fanciful continuations of the same story. Many of these still remain, but I can only mention a single one of them—"The Lament," which some consider to be of earlier origin than the latest form of the "*Nibelungen.*" It commences where the latter terminates —in the castle of Attila, among the corpses left by the great slaughter. It is written in the short couplet, which we have already met in "*Tristan*" and "*Parzival,*" and the inferiority of which to the Nibelungen verse we feel more clearly than ever, if we take it up immediately after the latter. It is a weaker hand, which endeavors to express that woe which the master only dared to indicate; but there is one really touching passage, where Theodoric calls upon the people to cease from weeping, through God's help; and the author says: "as much as they promised it to him, yet did they not do it." When the dead have all been lamented, the minstrel Schwemmel is sent as a messenger, to bear the news to Worms. Frau Ute, the mother of the three Kings and Chriemhild, dies of sorrow: the amazon Brunhild falls senseless; and the young Siegfried, her son and Gunther's, is proclaimed King of the Nibelungen.

Of the other epics or epical fragments which have been saved, I will only mention "*Gudrun,*" as the most complete in form, and the next in literary character,

after the "*Nibelungenlied.*" The subject, however, belongs to a different *sagenkreis*, or legendary circle: the scene is laid alternately in Ireland, Wales and on the Saxon shores of the North Sea. The same subject has very recently been used by a living poet, Mr. William Morris, in "The Lovers of Gudrun,"—one of the narratives in his "Earthly Paradise." This circumstance, at least, may increase your curiosity to explore a field of literature so long forgotten to Germany, and even now almost unknown to the very race whose civilization flowed from the same original fountain. If we, as Americans, in the national sense, have an equal share in Shakespeare, Spenser and Chaucer, with our English brethren, so the Gothic and Saxon blood in our veins claims the inheritance of the "*Hildebrandslied*" and the early Nibelungen legends as fully as the German people.

I have not now time to repeat the story of Gudrun and her lovers, of her brother Ortwin, and her betrothed, Herwig, of her captivity, and her hard service as a washerwoman by the sea-shore, of the fierce battle which released her, the joy of her mother Hilde, and the marriage of all the principal characters, which happily closes the thirty-two *Aventiures* of the poem. Its character seems almost idyllic when contrasted with the tragedy of the "*Nibelungenlied.*" Perhaps this distinction may be felt, in the single quotation which I shall give, where Horant, the "storm-eagle" of Denmark,

appears as a minstrel at the Court of Hagen, Gudrun's father:

Dô sich diu naht verendet | und ez begunde tagen,
Hôránt begunde singen, | daz dâ bî in den hagen
geswigen alle vogele | von sînem süezen sange.
die liute, die dâ sliefen, | die enlâgén dô niwet lange.

Now when the night was ended | and it was near to dawn,
Horánt began his singing, | and all the birds were drawn
To silence in the hedges, | because of his sweet song;
And the folk who still were sleeping, | when they heard him slept not long.

Sin liet erklang im shône, | ie hôher und ie baz.
Hagene ez selbe hôrte; | bî sînem wîbe er saz.
ûz der kemenâten | muosten s'in die zinne.
der gast wart wol berâten. | ez hôrte ez diu junge küniginne.

Sweetly to them it sounded, | so loud and then so low;
And also Hagen heard it, | with his wife of rose and snow.
Forth they came from the chamber, | to the hanging balcony;
As the minstrel wished, it happened; | for the young Queen heard the melody.

Des wilden Hagenen tohter | und ouch ir magedîn,
die sâzen unde loseten, | daz diu vogellîn
vergâzin ir doene | ûf dem hove frône,
wol hôrten ouch die helde, | daz der von Tenemarke sanc sô schône.

The daughter of wild Hagen, | and her maidens highest and least,
They sat and silently listened, | while the songs of the small birds ceased,
About the court of the castle, | and the heroes also heard,
How the minstrel of Denmark chanted, | so sweetly the souls of all were stirred.

Dô wart im gedanket | von wîben und von man.
dô sprach von Tenen Fruote: | " mîn neve móhte s'lân,

He was thanked by every woman, | and after by all the men,
And out of the guests of Denmark, | spake bold Fruote then:

sîn ungefüege doene, | die ich in hoere singen.
wem mag er ze dienste | als ungefüege tagewîse bringen?"

"My nephew should leave his singing: | 'tis too unskilfully played:
To whom may he be bringing | this awkward morning serenade?"

Dô sprâchen Hagenen helde: | "herre, lât vernemen:
niemen lebet sô siecher, | im möhte wol gezemen
hoeren sîne stimme, | diu gêt ûz sînem munde."
"daz wolde got von himele," | sprach der künic, "daz ich sie selbe kunde."

Answered Hagen, the hero: | "My lord, let me know your mind!
No one unsmote by sickness | could pleasure fail to find
In the beautiful voice that cometh | out of his mouth so true:"
Said the King: "Would to God in heaven | that I myself the same could do!"

Dô er dûe doene | sunder vol gesanc,
alle die ez hôrten, | dûhte ez niht sô lanc,
sie heten'z niht geahtet | einer hande wile,
obe er solde singen, | daz einer möhte rîten tûsent mile.

When he had sung three measures, | even to the end each song,
Every one thought who heard them, | the time was not so long.
They had not thought it longer, | than the turning of a hand,
Though he sang while one were riding | a thousand miles across the land.

Here there is altogether a softer, more lyrical spirit than in the "*Nibelungen.*" Something of the sentiment of the Minnesingers has been incorporated into the older legend, and it takes not only the form but also the feeling of the later age. Gervinus says—and in this sense we may admit the comparison—that "*Gudrun*" bears the

same relation to the "*Nibelungenlied*" as the "Odyssey" to the "Iliad:" "it has many qualities," he adds, "which we would willingly see added to the greater epic. It avoids the dry, colorless manner of narration, without adopting the hollow love of ornament of the courtly poets. Both poems may claim an immortal honor for the nation. They reach equally far into time with their deeds, customs and views of life,—and into those times, whereof the prejudiced Roman enemies reported the bravery and barbarism, but also the fidelity and honesty, the honor and chastity of our venerable ancestors."

So far I may quote and accept the views of the great historian of German literature; but when he compares these epics with the "inflated and disgusting British romances," referring to the legends of Arthur and the Holy Grail, he shows rather the egotism of his blood than the impartial vision of his calling.

But, in reality, we need no critical guide for this period, when we have once mastered the language. There was no elaborate art, even for the most accomplished of the courtly minstrels: each expressed what he knew, without those disguises or affectations of deeper wisdom which are common in a more highly developed age. The popular epics are as frank and transparent as the unlettered human nature of the race, and it is not the least of their many excellent qualities that they inspire us with a better respect for that nature, since it produced them.

V.

THE LITERATURE OF THE REFORMATION.

THE fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries seem, at first sight, to present nearly a blank in the history of German literature, and it would greatly simplify my task if I could omit all notice of them, and pass at once to the new spirit which was born with the Reformation, and partly because of it. Such an omission, however, would leave unexplained the manner of a change which distinguishes the German literature of the Middle Ages from that which succeeded it after so long an interval. The two intervening centuries were in some respects the darkest in mediæval history; they were certainly the most confused; and whether we take the political, the religious or the literary element, we shall have equal difficulty in finding an easy path through the chaos.

With the fall of the Hohenstaufen dynasty the power of the German Emperors in Italy was broken, to be soon entirely lost. The same result which attended the partial religious enfranchisement of Germany followed the political enfranchisement of Italy: the stars of Dante and Petrarch rose, as those of Walther and

Wolfram set. Art and Literature revived there, under the new republics, but in Germany the successors of the Hohenstaufens were men of a very different stamp. Rudolf of Hapsburg first set the example of a narrow attention to the affairs of his race, but he was no lover of the minstrels—and perhaps with good reason. The mediæval passion for song began at the top and worked downward, from reigning princes and poetic knights, through the subordinate classes of society. By the end of the thirteenth century the aristocratic power of production was exhausted, while the popular element —in spite of the "*Nibelungenlied*" and "*Gudrun*"—had not yet worked its way upward to influence the tastes or instincts of the higher classes. There was no prose literature as yet, and nearly a hundred years more elapsed before the official documents and records of the country were written in the German language.

We can hardly wonder that courtly patronage was withheld, when the minstrels had come to be bores, both in their numbers and in the quality of their songs. The largesse bestowed on a few lucky ones tempted great numbers of poor, ambitious, half-educated nobles to adopt the profession, and Germany began to resound with the strains of hungry, pretentious and not even elegant mediocrity. Then began the rivalry of the imperial candidates, the fierce discussion between emperor and nobles, the petty feuds of several hundred reigning princes, counts and prelates,—the appearance of a grow-

ing middle class,—all these causes resulting in constant war or menace of war. Pestilence, in new and fearful forms, followed by famine, swept over Europe; Huss came, and was burned, leaving a sword behind him which was not sheathed until nearly two hundred and fifty years had passed; and the forerunners of the modern time appeared, as the mariner's compass, gunpowder, watches and the art of printing. Yet, during this season of agitation and conflict and violence, the basis of a new literature was laid, partly through the revival of the ancient instincts of the people, and partly from the stimulus of coming religious and political struggles.

The two literary forces which were so marked in the Hohenstaufen period continue to be distinguished for some time afterward. Both the courtly and the popular minstrels followed for a while the same retrograde path. Even as they had evolved the epic from ballad material, they now began to take epic subjects and, from deficiency of power, to treat them as ballads; and, as is always the case, their vanity and arrogance increased in proportion as their performance became contemptible. We have but to read a few pages of Hugo von Montfort, Oswald von Wolkenstein, or Albrecht's "*Titurel*," to see the decadence of the courtly poetry; or of Kaspar von der Roen and Ulric Füterer, to see how the popular poetry kept pace with it downward. The one man who, in imitation of Petrarch, was

crowned by the Emperor, Frederic III., in the fifteenth century, was Conrad Celtes, whom we do not know as a poet. A single fact may be mentioned, to show the utter absence of the most ordinary literary instinct in that period. A Baron von Rapoltstein, who perceived that Wolfram von Eschenbach had omitted from his "*Parzival*" many episodes of the original legend, which would not harmonize with his poem, employed a Jew to translate, and a scribe to write for him, all these episodes, which, turned into the worst doggrel by himself, he then published as a continuation of Wolfram's great work! Even the "*Theuerdank*" of the Emperor Maximilian, although it must have been immensely admired by the courtiers, is too stupid to be read by any healthy person now-a-days. The scholar Vilmar, with all his apparent reverence for Maximilian, cannot help saying: "the '*Theuerdank*' now rests in the dust of the libraries, even as the noble Maximilian in the mould of his imperial vault. Let us leave them in peace, the great Emperor and his little book!"

About the only conclusion we can draw from the examination—I will not say the study—of those inferior works, is this: that Wolfram von Eschenbach was the one master whom the degenerate poets imitated in epic narrative, and Walther von der Vogelweide was their model in Minne-song. They must, therefore, have enjoyed a popularity in their own day, and have made an impression strong enough to be inherited by the com-

ing generations,—just as now no one dares to dispute Milton's or Dryden's place, though so few read them. In the popular poems, a didactic element gradually became apparent, possibly encouraged by the continued reproduction of the much older poem of "*Reinecke Vos*," which appeared, in the latest and best version, in Lübeck, in the year 1498. This is another of those works which come down to us, like the "*Nibelungenlied*," out of an impenetrable mist. We cannot say when or where it originated: we only know that it also grew by the accretion of scattered fragments or independent fables, that it was twice written in Latin, under the name of "*Reinardus*," in Flanders, in the twelfth century, that it soon after (or, possibly, even earlier) entered French and German literature, was retold by an unknown German author in the thirteenth century, and about the same time by William de Matoc, in Dutch,—some of these versions containing from fifty to one hundred thousand lines. I cannot undertake more than the mere mention of this remarkable work, not because it does not deserve it, but simply because it seems to have exercised no very important influence upon German literature, in comparison with the heroic epics. It contains, in fact, so much shrewd knowledge of human nature, so much wit and vivacity, and, as a story, is constructed with such undoubted skill, that when Goethe undertook to reproduce it in his own finished hexameters, he did not dare to change the original in any essential particular. But,

"*Reinecke Fuchs*" is a compound fable, born of those times when the fox, the lion, the wolf, the bear, the ass and the hare were made the object of that satire which the author was not at liberty to fling openly upon their human representatives. Fable is the refuge of the poet when his people are barbarous and his ruler despotic. As soon as he may venture to satirize and scourge the vices of classes, and then of individual characters, its office is at an end. For men are always more legitimately his theme than beasts, and Fable is only generally popular among restricted and undeveloped races, or with children in passing through the corresponding stage of growth. Not even Goethe's genius, and Kaulbach's after him, can make men read "*Reinecke Fuchs*" at this day. It impresses us as a performance of masked figures, and we prefer to see the full range of undisguised human expression on the stage. I find very little evidence that the older poem contributed toward the development of even the humorous element in German literature. It is an illustration, and a valuable one; but in dealing with the direct and powerful influences, the effects of which we can trace from century to century, it must be set aside, to be considered afterward from an independent point of view.

There are records, nevertheless, left by the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, which possess a genuine interest for us. Unnoticed at the time, much of the material must have died, as naturally as it originated, ignorant

of its own value; but here and there a little song or ballad, like the English Reliques gathered by Percy and Ellis, has survived the storms of the ages. The popular songs—by which I mean, not those written for the people, in imitation or continuation of the earlier heroic ballads or epics, but those written by the people themselves,—nay, not written, only sung, verse sprouting from verse as simply as leaf from leaf on a plant—these songs show that we have found a new spirit. They are an evidence that the impulse from above, under the Hohenstaufens, has at last touched bottom, and quickened the latent poetic instinct of the people, which begins to speak with the childish stammer of a new language.

Take, for example, this little "Trooper's Song," from the fifteenth century, hinting of plunder, but very bold and spirited:

Woluf, ir lieben gsellen,
die uns gebruodert sein,
und raten zuo! wir wöllen
dort prassen über Rein;
es kumt ein frischer summer,
daruf ich mein sach setz,
als ie lenger, ie dummer:
hin hin! wetz, eber, wetz!
wack, hüetlein, in dem gfretz!

Up and away, good comrades,
Ye gallant brothers mine,
Ride fast! it is our purpose
To dash beyond the Rhine.
There comes a fine fresh summer
And promises good store:
The longer 'tis, the better;
Up, whet your tusks, old boar!
The pasture waits once more.

Der sumer sol uns bringen
ein frischen freien muot,
leicht tuot uns irn gelingen,
so kum wir hinder guot;

The summer, it shall bring us
Good luck and courage pure:
Success for us is easy,
And gay return is sure.

sie sein vil e erritten,	Many rode out before us
dan graben, dise schetz,	And treasure found in store;
wir han uns lang gelitten:	We're starved too long already;
hin hin! wetz, eber, wetz!	Up, whet your tusks, old boar!
wack, hüetlein, in dem gfretz!	The pasture waits once more.
Drumb last üch nit erschrecken,	Then be not slow or timid,
ir frischen krieger stolz!	Ye troopers, fresh and good!
wir ziehen durch die hecken	We'll break through hedge and thicket,
und rumpeln in das holz;	And crash across the wood!
man wird noch unser geren	Ours shall be name and honor
und nit achten so letz,	As good as any wore:
all ding ein weil tuon weren:	What others do, we'll do it:
hin hin! wetz, eber, wetz!	Up, whet your tusks, old boar!
wack, hüetlein, in dem gfretz!	The pasture waits once more.

I think it requires but a slight familiarity with the German language, to feel the complete variation in tone and spirit between these verses and those of the Minnesingers. The movement, the character, almost the language, is that of modern song: so might Theodor Körner have written, had he lived in those days.

This popular poetry grew up simultaneously with another variety of lyric art which I must mention here, since it can be traced back to the middle of the fourteenth century, although its period of bloom was much later. It is the most remarkable phenomenon in the intellectual history of any people. One who is unacquainted with the development of German literature might well be pardoned for doubting it. The fact that thousands upon thousands of persons organized for the

purpose of writing poetry, and kept up their organization for centuries, seems incredible. What is called the *Meistergesang* in Germany (master-poetry, though a better translation is trade-poetry) was the successor of the *Minnegesang*, and there is some reason for conjecturing that Frauenlob, the last, and, to my thinking, the poorest of the Minnesingers, was one of the first Masters of the trade. When the organized societies had existed for some time throughout Germany, and traditions of former generations of professional singers began to gather about them, an attempt was made to give a Masonic mystery and antiquity to the craft; but it is not officially mentioned in documents before the close of the fourteenth century, and there is no evidence whatever that any of the guilds were in existence before the year 1300. The mechanics, singularly enough, were among the first to enroll themselves, and it is probable that the conservatism of their class was the chief means of sustaining these guilds of song for five hundred years; for, although the famous school of Nuremberg was closed in 1770, the last songs were sung by the twelve masters of Ulm, in the year 1330.

A rapid sketch of the nature and regulations of one of these master-schools must not be omitted. Each city had its own laws and customs, but the constitution of all was similar. The general method, according to which all songs must be written—called the *Tabulatur*—was first adopted. Then the members of the guild

were divided according to their knowledge and skill. Those still ignorant of the rhythmical laws were called "Pupils;" those acquainted with those laws, "School-friends;" those who knew several "tones" (forms of verse), were "Singers;" those who were able to compose new words to the old tones, were "Poets;" and, finally, those capable of inventing a new tone, were "Masters." Frauenlob, for instance, was the inventor of thirty-five such new tones. The names given to them were very curious and ludicrous. In his "Hyperion," Longfellow mentions the "flowery-paradise-measure, the frog-measure, and the looking-glass-measure,"—and he might also have added "the much-too-short-sunset-measure, the striped-saffron-flower-measure, the English-tin-measure, the blood-gleaming-wire-measure, the fat-badger-measure, the yellow-lion's-hide-measure, and the deceased-glutton-measure!"

When the guild assembled, three officials, called the *Merker*, took their seats upon a raised platform; their business was to listen sharply, detect faults in the singers, and either punish or reward them according to their deserts. The rules, in this respect, were very strict: among the crimes were not only unusual words, slight rhythmical changes or variations in the melody, but even what were called "false opinions." Whoever succeeded in fulfilling all the laws of the *Tabulatur*, and was therefore perfect in the trade, received a silver chain to which a medal, containing the head of King

David, was attached: the second prize was a wreath of artificial flowers made of silk.

When we consider that, from first to last, this institution of the Master-Song existed five hundred years, and that every considerable town in Germany had its guild, we may guess what a colossal quantity of mechanical poetry was produced. On the other hand, we shall not wonder that so little of it has survived. The Reformation only strengthened it by giving it a religious character, and the Thirty Years' War probably only made the blood-gleaming-wire-measure more common, for it hardly shook a single society out of existence. Of the thousands of Masters who lived and died, only one—the greatest—has been much heard of outside of Germany, and that is Hans Sachs, of Nuremberg, the writer of more than six thousand poems and dramatic pieces. Even he, though the later poets and the modern critics of Germany have recognized his merit and deserved prominence in a dreary literary age—even he cannot escape the hard mechanical touch of his laws of master-song. In Kaulbach's picture of the Reformation, he is drawn in his leather apron, seated, and counting off the feet of his verse with his thumb and forefinger. This is a nice characteristic; for I need hardly tell you that the Poet who is born, and not made, never counts his feet in that way. Nevertheless, there is little of Hans Sachs's poetry which does not suggest to me that thumb and forefinger.

Since the members were almost exclusively mechanics, we might expect that so long a metrical discipline must have affected the tastes and instincts of the people. It must, at least, have partly laid the basis of that general æsthetic development which occurred seventy or eighty years ago. At the present day there are few educated Germans, men or women, who cannot write rhythmically correct verse. But when we come to speak of poetry as the expression of intellectual growth, the result would probably be the very opposite. The good mechanics confounded the letter and the spirit, like many men in much higher stations. I confess there is something picturesque and even beautiful in this long devotion to the external form, with all its unnatural and ludicrous features; and I am ready to agree with Longfellow, when he, a Master-singer, thus sings of those old Master-singers:

"From remote and sunless suburbs came they to the friendly guild,
Building nests in Fame's great temple, as in spouts the swallows build.
As the weaver plied his shuttle, wove he too the mystic rhyme;
And the smith his iron measures hammered to the anvil's chime;
Thanking God, whose boundless wisdom makes the flowers of poesy bloom
In the forge's dust and cinders, in the tissues of the loom."

Here, then, are the chief features of German literature between the years 1300 and 1500—weak echoes of the epic and the minne-song, gradually dying of their own imbecility: the institution of poetry as a trade or

handicraft (more correctly, *wordicraft*); the modest growth of a new spirit of song among the common people; the increasing prominence of the didactic element, and the slow and painful effort of the neglected German prose to raise itself into notice. The invention of printing, at the start, gave currency to many more indifferent works than to those which needed to be saved; but the fermentation which preceded the great religious movement had already commenced, and it was destined to stamp its character upon nearly all the literature of the next century.

Before we turn to the coming change, let me mention two or three works which lift themselves a little above the level of the intermediate period. In the first place many knightly legends and old traditions were translated and read throughout Germany—among others "*Die sieben weisen Meister*" (The Seven Wise Masters) and the "*Gesta Romanorum;*" various historical chronicles were written; and the theological writings of Tauler, the mystic, and Gailer von Kaysersberg, are worthy of notice. Sebastian Brandt, toward the close of the fifteenth century, published his "*Narrenschiff*" (Ship of Fools) and his "*Narrenspiegel*" (Mirror of Fools), didactic poems of a Hudibrastic character, full of shrewd and pithy phrases, in a coarse Alsatian German, and with frequent gleams of a genuine humor. They were very popular for some years, until the religious division of Germany drew nearer, when Brandt, like his successor,

Thomas Murner, became a bitter opponent of the Reformation. Murner followed with his "*Narrenbeschwörung*" (Conjuration of Fools); but his chief merit was his version of the pranks of *Till Eulenspiegel* (Till Owlglass)—a famous book ever since that day. A translation of it was published in this country only four or five years ago. I might also mention the names of Rosenblüt and Muscatblüt, and of that hand-organ grinder, Caspar von der Roen, but only because they sometimes occur in German literature. They wrote nothing of sufficient interest to review here.

The Reformation was partly heralded by pamphlets and poems, as well as by sermons. All the principal Reformers rose at once, as authors, far above their immediate literary predecessors. That daring and independent spirit which grew from their strongest spiritual convictions extended itself to everything which they spoke or wrote. In forgetting the conventionalities of literature, and giving their whole soul and strength to the clearest utterance of their views, they unconsciously acquired a higher literary style. In singing what they felt to be God's truth, they did not take the Minnesingers as models, or consider the artificial rules of the Masters; and so there came into their songs a new, veritable sweetness and strength, drawn directly from the heart. It was no time for purely æsthetic development; fancy or imagination could not soar in that stern, disturbed atmosphere. But the basis was then laid, on

which the immortal literature of the last century is founded.

Zwingli was born in November, 1483, Luther two months afterward, and Ulric von Hutten in 1488. They worked simultaneously, but in different ways and with very different degrees of literary merit. Zwingli was polemical, Hutten satirical, and Luther creative. Hutten's Dialogues, in point, satire and rapid ease of movement, surpass any German prose before him; but they, like all German prose up to that time, are marked by the local dialect of the author. The language was gradually developing its qualities, but in an irregular and not very coherent fashion. Philologically, there were almost as many different varieties of prose as there were authors, while poetry (except the unnoticed songs of the people) had hardened into the rigid moulds made for it more than two hundred years before.

The man who re-created the German language—I hardly think the expression too strong—was Martin Luther. It was his fortune and that of the world that he was so equally great in many directions—as a personal character, as a man of action, as a teacher and preacher, and, finally, as an author. No one before him, and no one for nearly two hundred years after him, saw that the German tongue must be sought for in the mouths of the people—that the exhausted expression of the earlier ages could not be revived, but that the newer, fuller and richer speech, then in its childhood,

must at once be acknowledged and adopted. He made it the vehicle of what was divinest in human language; and those who are not informed of his manner of translating the Bible, cannot appreciate the originality of his work, or the marvelous truth of the instinct which led him to it.

With all his scholarship, Luther dropped the theological style, and sought among the people for phrases as artless and simple as those of the Hebrew writers. He frequented the market-place, the merry-making, the house of birth, marriage or death among the common people, in order to catch the fullest expression of their feelings in the simplest words. He enlisted his friends in the same service, begging them to note down for him any peculiar, sententious phrase; "for," said he, "I cannot use the words heard in castles and at courts." Not a sentence of the Bible was translated, until he had sought for the briefest, clearest and strongest German equivalent to it. He writes, in 1530: "I have exerted myself, in translating, to give pure and clear German. And it has verily happened, that we have sought and questioned a fortnight, three, four weeks, for a single word, and yet it was not always found. In Job we so labored, Philip Melanchthon, Aurogallus and I, that in four days we sometimes barely finished three lines. . . . It is well enough to plow, when the field is cleared; but to root out stock and stone, and prepare the ground, is what no one will."

He illustrates his own plan of translation by an example which is so interesting that I must quote it: "We must not ask the letters in the Latin language how we should speak German, as the asses do, but we must ask the mother in the house, the children in the lanes, the common man in the market-place, and read in their mouths how they speak, and translate according thereto: then they understand, for they see we are speaking German to them. As when Christ says: *Ex abundantia cordis os loquitur.* Now if I were to follow the asses, they would dissect for me the letters and thus translate: 'Out of the superabundance of the heart, speaks the mouth.' Now tell me, is that spoken German? What German understands that? What is superabundance of the heart, to a German? No German would say that, unless he meant that he had too much of a heart, or too big a heart, although even that is not correct; for superabundance of heart is no German, any more than—superabundance of house, superabundance of cooking-stove, superabundance of bench; but thus speaketh the mother in the house and the common man: Whose heart is full, his mouth overflows. That is Germanly spoken, such as I have endeavored to do, but, alas! not always succeeded."

Luther translated the Bible eighty years before our English version was produced. I do not know whether the English translators made any use of his labors, although they inclined toward the same plan, without

following it so conscientiously. In regard to accuracy of rendering, there is less difference. Bunsen, in his "*Bibelwerk*," states that there are more than five hundred errors in either version. But, in regard to the fullness, the strength, the tenderness, the vital power of language, I think Luther's Bible decidedly superior to our own. The instinct of one great man, is, in such matters, if not a safer, at least a more satisfactory guide than the average judgment of forty-seven men. Luther was a poet as well as a theologian, and, as a poet, he was able to feel, as no theologian could, the intrinsic difference of spirit and character in the different books of the Old Testament,—not only to feel, but, through the sympathetic quality of the poetic nature, to reproduce them. These ten years, from 1522 to 1532, which he devoted to the work, were not only years of unremitting, prayerful, conscientious labor, but also of warm, bright, joyous intellectual creation. We can only appreciate his wonderful achievement by comparing it with any German prose before his time. Let me quote his version of the 139th Psalm, as an example of the simplicity, the strength and the nobility of his style:

Herr, du erforschest mich, und kennest mich.

2.—Ich sitze oder stehe auf, so weisst du es; du verstehest meine Gedanken von ferne.

3.—Ich gehe oder liege, so bist du um mich, und siehest alle meine Wege.

4.—Denn siehe, es ist kein Wort auf meiner Zunge, das du, Herr, nicht Alles wissest.

5.—Du schaffest es, was ich vor oder hernach thue, und hältst deine Hand über mir.
6.—Solches Erkenntniss ist mir zu wunderlich und zu hoch; ich kann es nicht begreifen.
7.—Wo soll ich hingehen vor deinem Geist? Und wo soll ich hinfliehen vor deinem Angesicht?
8.—Führe ich gen Himmel, so bist du da. Bettete ich mir in die Hölle, siehe, so bist du auch da.
9.—Nähme ich Flügel der Morgenröthe, und bliebe am äussersten Meer,
10.—So würde mich doch deine Hand daselbst führen, und deine Rechte mich halten.
11.—Spräche ich: Finsterniss möge mich decken; so muss die Nacht auch Licht um mich seyn.
12.—Denn auch Finsterniss nicht finster ist bei dir, und die Nacht leuchtet wie der Tag; Finsterniss ist wie das Licht.

Now let us take a few verses from the well-known chapter of Paul—the thirteenth of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, and feel how Luther was equally capable of expressing the warmth, the tenderness and the beauty of the original. You will note that the word "charity" of our version is more correctly rendered "love":

Wenn ich mit Menschen- und mit Engelzungen redete, und hätte der Liebe nicht; so wäre ich ein tönend Erz, oder eine klingende Schelle.
2.—Und wenn ich weissagen könnte, und wüsste alle Geheimnisse, und alle Erkenntniss, und hätte allen Glauben, also, dass ich Berge versetzte, und hätte der Liebe nicht; so wäre ich nichts.
3.—Und wenn ich alle meine Habe den Armen gäbe, und liesse meinen Leib brennen, und hätte der Liebe nicht; so wäre mir's nichts nütze.
4.—Die Liebe is langmüthig und freundlich, die Liebe eifert nicht, die Liebe treibt nicht Muthwillen, sie blähet sich nicht,
5.—Sie stellet sich nicht ungeberdig, sie suchet nicht das Ihre, sie lässt sich nicht erbittern, sie trachtet nicht nach Schaden,

6.—Sie freuet sich nicht der Ungerechtigkeit, sie freuet sich aber der Wahrheit,
7.—Sie verträgt Alles, sie glaubet Alles, sie hoffet Alles, sie duldet Alles.
8.—Die Liebe höret nimmer auf, so doch die Weissagungen aufhören werden, und die Sprachen aufhören werden, und das Erkenntniss aufhören wird.

I have not the time to compare, as I should wish, certain passages, verse by verse, nor, indeed, to dwell longer on a work which, although a translation, possesses for the German race the literary importance of an original creation. Let us take two very different examples of Luther's abilities as an author—the first, that celebrated hymn, "*Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott*," which should be properly chanted to his own music, as it still is in Germany, in order to be fully appreciated. The theme is taken from the forty-sixth Psalm; the translation is Carlyle's:

EIn feste burg ist vnser Gott,
ein gute wehr vnd waffen:
Er hilfft vns frey aus aller not
die vns itzt hat betroffen.
Der alt böse feind
mit ernst ers itzt meint,
gros macht vnd viel list
sein grausam rüstung ist,
auff erd ist nichts seins gleichen.

A safe stronghold our God is still,
A trusty shield and weapon;
He'll help us clear from all the ill
That hath us now o'ertaken.
The ancient Prince of Hell
Has risen with purpose fell;
Strong mail of Craft and Power
He weareth in this hour,
On Earth is not his fellow.

Mit vnser macht ist nichts gethan,
wir sind gar bald verloren:
Es streit für vns der rechte man,
den Gott hat selbs erkoren.

With force of arms we nothing can,
Full soon were we down-ridden;
But for us fights the proper Man,
Whom God himself hath bidden.

Fragstu, wer der ist?
er heisst Jhesus Christ,
der HERR Zebaoth,
vnd ist kein ander Gott,
das felt mus er behalten.

Vnd wenn die welt vol Teuffel wer,
vnd wolt vns gar verschlingen,
so fürchten wir vns nicht so sehr,
es sol vns doch gelingen.
Der Fürst dieser welt,
wie sawr er sich stelt,
thut er vns doch nicht,
das macht, er ist gericht,
ein wörtlin kan jn fellen.

Das wort sie söllen lassen stan
vnd kein danck dazu haben,
Er ist bey vns wol auff dem plan
mit seinem geist vnd gaben.
Nemen sie den leib,
gut, ehr, kind vnd weib:
las fahren dahin,
sie habens kein gewin,
Das Reich mus vns doch bleiben.

Ask ye, Who is this same?
Christ Jesus is his name,
The Lord Zebaoth's Son,
He and no other one
Shall conquer in the battle.

And were this world all Devils o'er,
And watching to devour us,
We lay it not to heart so sore,
Not they can overpower us.
And let the Prince of Ill
Look grim as e'er he will,
He harms us not a whit:
For why? His doom is writ,
A word shall quickly slay him.

God's Word, for all their craft and force,
One moment will not linger,
But spite of Hell shall have its course,
'Tis written by his finger.
And though they take our life,
Goods, honour, children, wife,
Yet is their profit small;
These things shall vanish all,
The City of God remaineth.

We seem to hear the steps of a giant, to whom everything must give way, in the strong, short march of the original lines. I meant to quote, as a contrast to this, the letter which Luther wrote to his little son, as delightfully artless and childlike a piece of writing as anything which Hans Christian Andersen has ever produced. But it is so well known that I have decided to translate, instead, a Christmas poem for

children, which I believe has never been rendered into English:

VOm Himel hoch da kom ich her,
ich bring euch gute newe mehr,

Der guten mehr bring ich so viel
dauon ich singen vnd sagen wil.

From Heaven I come, a herald true,
To bring glad tidings down to you.

So much good news I hither bring
That I thereof must speak and sing.

Euch ist ein kindlein heut geborn,
von einer Jungfraw, auserkorn,

Ein kindelein, so zart und fein,
das sol ewr freud vnd wonne sein.

There's born, to-day, a little child,
And from a Virgin, pure and mild;

A babe so fine and fair to see,
It must your bliss and fortune be.

Es ist der HERR Christ vnser Gott,
der wil euch fürn aus aller not,

Er wil ewr Heiland selber sein,
von allen sunden machen rein.

'Tis Christ, the Lord, our God indeed,
Who out of trouble us shall lead;

He shall your Saviour be, and make
Ye pure of sin for his sweet sake.

Er bringt euch alle seligkeit,
die Gott der Vater hat bereit,

Das jr mit vns im himelreich
solt leben nu vnd ewigleich.

All joy to you his hand shall bear,
Which God the Father did prepare,

That so with us ye children be
In his own heaven eternally.

So mercket nu das zeichen recht,
die krippen, windelein so schlecht,

Now mark ye well what tokens these:
The manger and the cloth of frieze.

Da findet jr das kind gelegt,
das alle welt erhelt und tregt.

Des lasst vns alle frölich sein
vnd mit den hirten gehen hinein,
Zu sehen, was Gott vns hat beschert,
mit seinem lieben Son verehrt.

Merck auff, mein hertz, vnd sich dort hin:
was ligt doch in dem krippelin,
Was ist das schöne kindelin?
es ist das liebe Jhesulin.

Bis willekomen, du edler gast,
den Sunder nicht verschmehet hast,
Vnd kömpst ins elend her zu mir;
wie sol ich immer dancken dir?

Ach, HERR, du schöpffer aller ding,
wie bistu worden so gering.
Dass du da ligst auff dürrem gras,
dauon ein rind vnd esel ass.

Vnd wer die welt vielmal so weit,
von edel stein vnd gold bereit,

The little baby there ye'll find,
Who shall the world sustain and bind.

Let us with gladness and with prayer
Now enter with the shepherds there,
To see what God for us hath done
In giving us his darling Son.

Look up, my dears! turn there your eyes:
What is it in the manger lies?
Who is the babe, the lamb, the dove?
'Tis little Jesus whom we love.

Be welcome, guest so nobly prized,
Who hast the sinner not despised,
And should'st thou come thro' woe to me,
How shall I render thanks to thee?

Ah, Lord! who did'st all things create,
How art thou fallen to low estate!
Upon dry grass thou liest here:
Beside thee feed the ass and steer.

Were the whole world full as't could hold
Of precious jewels and of gold,

So wer sie doch dir viel zu klein,
zu sein ein enges wigelein.

Der sammet vnd die seiden dein,
das ist grob hew und windelein,

Darauff du, König so gross vnd reich,
her prangst, als wers dein Himelreich.

Ach, mein hertzliebes Jhesulin,
mach dir ein rein sanfft bettelin,
Zu rugen in meins hertzen schrein,
das ich nimer vergesse dein.

Dauon ich allzeit fröhlich sey,
zu springen, singen imer frey
Das rechte Sussanine schon,
mit hertzen lust den süssen thon.

Lob, ehr sey Gott im höchsten thron,
der vns schenckt seinen einigen Son,
Des frewen sich der engel schar,
vnd singen vns solchs newes jar.

For thee 'twere far too small: 'twould be
A narrow cradle unto thee!

Thy velvet and thy silks, to-day,
Are coarsest cloth and roughest hay,
Whereon thou, mighty King, dost lie
As grandly as in Heaven high.

Ah, Jesus, darling of my breast,
Make thee a pure, soft bed of rest,
Within my heart as in a shrine,
That so I keep thy love divine.

Thence happy shall I always be,
And leap and sing, rejoicing free,
As one who feels the perfect tone
Of sweet heart-music is his own.

Glory to God in the Highest spend,
Who us His only Son did send,
While angels now sing hymns of cheer,
To give the world a glad New-year.

I make no apology for quoting this simple strain; for when we have the expression of a man's power and energy on the one side, and of his delicacy of mind and playful tenderness of heart on the other, we have

the broadest measure of his character. The influence of Luther on German literature cannot be explained until we have seen how sound and vigorous and many-sided was the new spirit which he infused into the language. For it is not simply the grand and stately elements which must be developed; not the subtlety which befits speculation, or the keenness and point which are required for satire; but chiefly the power of expressing homely human sentiment and painting the common phases of life.

The hymns—or rather, devotional poems,—written by Luther's contemporaries, have a greater or less resemblance to his, in form and style. The one *lied* of Ulric von Hutten, commencing "*Ich hab's gewagt*," has the keenness of a sword-thrust: those of Paul Eber, Hermann, Nicolai and others vary according to the temperament or talent of the writer, but have a family resemblance. Some are rough in measure and almost rude in diction; others have some fluency and melody, with no special literary merit. To read them after Luther, is like reading Dr. Watts after Milton's "Hymn on the Nativity." I do not consider it necessary to give any specimens of their hymns, except a single verse from that written by the Duke John Frederick, the Magnanimous, of Saxony:

As 't pleases God, so let it pass;
The birds may take my sorrow;
If fortune shun my house to-day,
I'll wait until to-morrow.

The goods I have
I still shall save,
Or, if some part forsake me,
Thank God, who's just:
What must be, must;
Good luck may still o'ertake me!

The secular poets of the first half of the sixteenth century may be easily reviewed. I find no author of note, except Hans Sachs, although some of the shorter lyrics of Weckrlin and Andræa are more than mechanical verse. One of the most prolific of this class of poets was Helmbold, whose productions were almost as plentiful, and not much more valuable, in a literary sense, than the rhymed advertisements of the newspapers now-a-days.

Hans Sachs, who was born in 1494 and lived until 1576, must not be confounded with the host of Mastersingers. He was a man of genuine native ability, of great experience and unusual learning. Educated at a good school as a boy, he then became a shoemaker, traveled as a wandering journeyman all over Germany, from the Baltic to the Tyrolese Alps, was a hunter in Maximilian's service, made the personal acquaintance of Luther, and returned to Nuremberg, at the age of twenty-two, to marry and devote himself to poetry. He was in easy circumstances, and did not need to depend on his trade. He knew all German and the best of classic literature, and even the works of Petrarch and Boccaccio. His glowing Protestantism gave much of his poetry a

religious and didactic character, and the soulless mechanism of the Master-craft is too frequently apparent; but we also meet with lyrics and short dramatic pieces which are full of nature and grace, and which charm us by their happy felicity of language. If we approve only five per cent. of his productions, we shall still have three hundred good works out of six thousand. His narrative tone is sometimes admirable, especially when he describes the scenes and circumstances of the life around him, not inventing, but representing poetically—to use Grimm's distinction between *erdichten* and *dichten*. He seems to be happiest when both subject and sentiment are what is called *bürgerlich*, that is, belonging to the solid, thrifty middle class: there is nothing of the fine frenzy in him. Among English authors, I might compare him to Crabbe in the qualities of careful, nice observation and sturdy good sense, but Crabbe was much his inferior in grace and variety of expression. Lessing and Goethe were among the first to rescue the fame of Hans Sachs from the disrespect into which it had fallen, under the dominion of French taste in Germany. Now, the honest Master is lifted again upon his proper pedestal, and sits (to quote Longfellow again):

> "as in Adam Puschman's song,
> As the old man, gray and dove-like, with his great beard white and long."

I have had some difficulty in selecting a single short poem of Hans Sachs, which may illustrate the lighter

and more graceful features of his Muse. Every poem is accompanied by a statement of its measure, whether copied from an older master or original. The latter, of course, is the more characteristic. As scarcely anything of Hans Sachs has ever been translated, I must furnish at least one specimen; and I have taken a short poem, which he says was written in 1517, in his own "silver measure."

DICHTER UND SINGER.	THE POET AND THE SINGER.
I.	
Ich lob ein brünlein küle	I like a fountain, flowing
mit ursprunges aufwüle	Beside a cavern, showing
für ein gross wasserhüle,	No token, in its going,
die keinen ursprung hat.	Of whence its waters came.
Sich allein muss besechen	Itself must fill forever,
mit zufliessenden bechen	And by its own endeavor,
der brünnlein, mag ich sprechen;	The urn of its light river:
die hül nit lang bestat.	The cave is not the same.
Wan von der sunen grosser hitz	When from the sun's increasing heat,
im sumerlangen tak	In days of summertime,
die hül wirt faul und gar unnütz,	The cave is neither fresh nor sweet,
gewint bosen geschmak;	But smells of mould and slime,
sie trucknet ein, wirt grün und gelb;	And dries, and groweth rank and green;
so frischet sich das brünnlein selb	Then doth the fount itself keep clean
mit seinem uresprange,	From out its hidden sources,—
beleibet unbezwunge	Conquers the sun's hot forces
von der sune scheinunge,	In all its crystal courses,
es wirt nit faul noch mat.	And grows not foul nor dull.
II.	
Das brünlein ich geleiche	That fountain I compare to
einem dichter kunstreiche,	The poet, who doth swear to

der gesang anfenkleiche
dichtet aus künsten grunt;
Bas lob ich den mit rechte
für einen singer schlechte,
der sein gesang enpfechte
aus eines fremden munt.
Wan so entspringet neue kunst,
noch sherfer, dan die alt,
des singers gesang ist umsunst,
er wirt geschweiget balt;
er kan nit gen neue gespor
sie sei im den gebanet vor
durch den dichter on sherzen,

der aus kunstreichem herzen
kan dichten ane scherzen
neu gesang alle stunt.

The poetry he's heir to;
And honors art the more.
But he—I say with sorrow—
Is a wretched singer thorough,
Who all his songs must borrow
From what was sung before.
For when new art is born again,
Better than ancient tune,
The singer's song is all in vain:
He shall be silenced soon:
No effort of his own avails
To follow on those fresher trails,
'Gainst him whose fancies bear us,—
Whose heart and art declare us,
That lightly he can spare us
A new song every hour.

III.

Won alle künst auf erden
teglich gescherfet werden
von grobheit und geferden,
die man vor darin fant.
Von gesang ich euch sage,

das er von tag zu tage
noch scherfer werden mage
durch den dichter, verstant.
Darum gib ich dem dichter ganz

ein kron von rotem golt
und dem singer ein grünen kranz.
darbei ir merken solt:
kem der singer auf todes bar,
sein kunst mit im al stirbet gar;
wirt der dichter begraben,
sein kunst wirt erst erhaben
müntlich und in buchstaben
gar weit in mengem lant.

Our art, of truth the mirror,
Should daily be the clearer
Of coarseness and of error,
That erewhile clouded it.
And song — there's nothing surer!—
Should day by day be purer,
And nobler, and securer,
Made by the poet's wit.
Therefore a crown of red-gold sheen
The poet should receive;
The singer but a garland green.

That ye this truth believe:
Lieth the singer cold and dead,
His art with him hath perished;
But when the poet dieth
His art that end denieth,
And liveth still, and flieth
To many a distant land.

The songs of the people continued to increase and to be sung, during the period of the Reformation. It is only in them, in fact, that we find the music and the melody of verse, of which the devotional and didactic poetry is so bare. The character of these songs remains the same as in the previous century, but the language shows a great improvement. Take this lovely little "Hunter's Song," by some unknown peasant-author:

Es jagt ein jeger wolgemût	A hunter hunted merrily,
er jagt auss frischem freiem mût	Under the leafy linden-tree;
wol unter eine grüne linden,	His free, strong heart upbore him;
er jagt derselben tierlein vil	Many a beast he hunted down,
mit seinen schnellen winden.	With his greyhounds fast before him.
Er jagt uber berg und tiefe tal	He sped through vale, o'er mountain cold,
under den stauden überal,	The thicket and the bushy wold,
sein hörnlein tat er blasen;	And blew his horn so clearly;
sein lieb under einer stauden sass,	But under the boughs his sweetheart sat,
tet auf den jeger losen.	And looked on him so dearly.
Er schweift sein mantel in das gras,	Upon the ground his cloak he threw,
er bat sie, dass sie zû im sass,	Sat there, and her beside him drew,
mit weissen armen umbfangen:	And said, her white hand pressing:
"So gehab dich wol, mein trösterin!	"Well may'st thou fare, consoler mine,
nach dir stet mein verlangen.	My one desire and blessing!

"Hat uns der reif, hat uns der schne,	"If hoar-frost come, or snow be seen,
hat uns erfrört den grünen kle,	To kill for us the clover green
die blümlein auf der heiden:	And the blossoms on the heather,
wo zwei herzlieb bei einander sind,	Nor frost nor snow can part the twain
die zwei sol niemant scheiden."	Who love, and sit together!"

Or this little song of the "Nettle-Wreath":

"O baurnknecht, lass die röslein stan!	"O peasant-lad, let the roses be!
sie sein nit dein!	Not for thee they blow!
du tregst noch wol von nesselkraut	Thou wearest still of the nettle-weed
ein krenzelein."	Thy wreath of woe."
Das nesselkraut ist bitter und saur,	The nettle-weed is bitter and sour,
und brennet mich:	And burneth me:
verloren hab ich mein schönes lieb	But that I lose my fairest lóve
das reuwet mich.	Is my misery.
Es reut mich sehr, und tut mir in meinem herzen we:	This I lament, and thence my heart Is sad and sore:
gesegn dich gott, mein holder bul,	God keep thee now, lost, lovely girl!
ich sehe dich nimmer me!	I shall never see thee more.

At first it may seem remarkable that, with such elements as Luther's prose and the birth of a true poetry among the people, there was not an immediate revival of literature in Germany. The new faith, however, did not bring peace, but a sword. If arms silence laws, they silence letters all the more speedily. The

oppressions of the feudal system, which brought on the Peasants' War in Luther's time, were strengthened by the bloody failure of that war: rulers and nobles trod out every spark of a claim for better rights among the people. Thus, toward the close of the sixteenth century, when Spain and Italy and England were rejoicing in their classic age of literature, the finer mind of Germany seemed to be dead. But for Luther's achievements, the Age of the Reformation would seem to be one of baffled promise, separated by dreary centuries from the literature of the Middle Ages, on the one hand, and that of the modern period on the other. Yet, as the strong foundations of an edifice must sometimes wait long for the building of the superstructure, so here the basis of the later development was complete, and the development itself predicted, in spite of all delays.

VI.

THE LITERATURE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

In our journey downward, from the earliest period of German literature, we have traversed very different regions. We found ourselves, at the start, as in a rough land of mountains and dark fir forests, inhabited by a strong and simple race. There are meadows and fresh clearings in the valleys, but from the deeper gorges we hear the chant of Druids and the harps of the last Bardic singers. Then we issue upon a long, barren waste, beyond which lies the bright, busy, crowded land of the Middle Ages, with its castles and cathedrals, its marches and tournaments, its mingled costumes of the East and the West, its echoes of Palestine and Provence, of Brittany and Cornwall. Then again comes a waste, through which we walk wearily for a long time, before we reach a new region—a land of earnest workers and builders, where the first resting-place we find is the block of a new edifice, not yet lifted to its place—a land of change and preparation, overhung by a doubtful sky, but overblown by a keen, bracing air, in which the race again grows strong. We have now one more long, half-settled stretch of monotonous plain to traverse, before

finding the work of the builders completed, and the substructures of thought risen into temples which stand fair and firm under a sky of eternal sunshine.

It is impossible for me, now, to give even a flying explanation of the many depressing influences which operated directly upon the literary activity of the German people during the latter half of the sixteenth and the whole of the seventeenth century. I can only name the chief of them: first, the change in the spirit and character of the Reformation, after the Peasants' War, and again after Luther's death, coupled with the influence of the nobles and the ruling princes, who were at once despotic and indifferent to letters; then the terrible Thirty Years' War,—the cruelest infliction to which any people were ever exposed; and, finally, the subjection of Germany to the tastes and the fashions of France and of French thought.

Although Luther had created the modern High-German on the basis of the common speech of the people, and forced the Low-German into the position of a dialect, the dry theological tendency of his successors interfered directly with his work. The true beginning of a new literature having been found, it could only be developed in the same direction. But when the democratic element in the Reformation was suppressed, the popular mine of speech which Luther discovered was no longer worked. Indeed the religious principle, which was inherited by the next generation, became a different

agency from that which had been attained through struggle and sacrifice. It had no longer the same vital, informing power; and it settled rapidly into a dogmatism only less rigid than that of the Church of Rome. Not only the literary interests suffered under this state of things, but the very language became corrupted by neglect and the style of ignorant and pretentious writers. In the beginning of the seventeenth century, Dr. Fabricius writes: "Our German tongue is not to that extent poor and decayed, as many persons would now have us believe, so patching and larding it with French and Italian, that they cannot even send a little letter without furbishing it with other languages, so that one, in order to understand it, ought to know all the tongues of Christendom, to the great disgrace and injury of our German language." It was probably the same circumstance which led Fischart to write, a little earlier: "Our language is also a language, and can call a sack a *sack*, as well as the Latins can call it a *saccus*."

Directly following this haughty indifference of the higher class, this spiritual degeneracy of the middle class, and the suppression of the claims of the common people, came the Thirty Years' War,—that terrible period from which Germany, in a material and political sense, has been nearly two hundred years in recovering. Whole regions were so devastated that the wolf and the bear resumed their original ownership; the slow education of centuries was swept away; a second barba-

rism, worse than the first, in some instances took its place; and the Westphalian Peace left a land broken and despoiled of nearly everything, except the power of the rulers over their subjects. I have seen more than one district of Germany which, in 1850, had just recovered the same amount of population, of cattle and of agricultural productions which it possessed before the year 1618. It is only by such statements that we can measure the results of that struggle. The Germany of to-day is not the work of its petty princes, not the work of the sham emperors, whose "holy Roman" sceptre was the symbol of imaginary power, but the work of the people, liberated, educated, conscious of their strength and grand in exercising it.

When we have studied the history of Germany sufficiently to comprehend the constant, almost indescribable trials and sufferings of the people during this period, we no longer wonder at their retarded intellectual development. But for an infinite patience and courage, they must have lost their national identity, like the Goths and Burgundians. But, as we have seen, much good seed had been planted, and such seed will always germinate, though held in the hand of an Egyptian mummy for three thousand years. It was only a delayed, not a prevented growth. Two men then arose who belong to the greatest minds of the world—two men whose peculiar labors abstracted them from the miserable circumstances into which they were born,

and rendered them comparatively independent of their time. They were Kepler and Leibnitz. One belongs to science, and the other to philosophy. But Kepler is hardly to be called an author, and Leibnitz wrote chiefly in Latin, and therefore hardly connects himself with German literature.

The one author who especially represents the latter half of the sixteenth century is Johannes Fischart. We know very little about his life—not even the probable date of his birth; but only that he was a jurist and theologian, that he lived in Strasburg, Speyer and Forbach, that he traveled much, having visited England, and was acquainted with many languages. He was partly a contemporary of Shakespeare, to whose portrait his own has some resemblance, and whom he resembled also in the wonderful breadth and variety of his accomplishments. Although his works were quite popular during his life, they seem to have been wholly forgotten at the close of the Thirty Years' War, and his name was almost unknown when revived by the late recognition of Bodmer and Lessing. There was really, in the long interval between his death and the birth of these men, no author of sufficient scope to appreciate his works, unless it was Frederick v. Logau, who probably never heard of him.

The first thing which strikes us in Fischart is his style, which reminds us of Rabelais, and sometimes of Richter. His vocabulary is inexhaustible, and his sati-

rical humor never wearies. He is quite equal to Rabelais in the invention of comical words, and it is therefore almost impossible to translate many of his best passages. He even transforms, or Germanizes with great humor, words of foreign origin, constituting, in fact, a very curious form of punning,—as *melancholisch*, which he turns into *maul-häng-cholisch*, *podagra* into *pfoten-gram*, and *Jesuiter* into *Jesu-wider*. Such specimens will give you an idea of his peculiar manner. In a sort of grotesque absurdity, he was the forerunner of a class of American authors who are now attempting to make everything in the world comical for us, from the raising of potatoes to the massacre of St. Bartholomew; but, unlike those American authors, his fun rests on a broad foundation of learning, and is constantly softened and lightened by a noble humanity. When his humor is apparently most lawless and chaotic, he never loses sight of its chosen object. Even his "*Aller Practik Grossmutter*," which seems to be a collection of absurdities, was meant to cure the people of their dependence on soothsayers and prognosticating almanacs. I regret that I have not had time to attempt the translation of a few passages, in which Fischart's remarkable humor and style might be preserved; but in order to give anything like a fair representation of his comic genius in English, we should have to find a man like Urquhart, the translator of Rabelais, and such translators appear as rarely as the original authors.

I can give only a little specimen of his serious prose, from his "Book of Conjugal Virtue," wherein he compares matrimony to a ship:

On the sea the wind is the governing power; in the household it is God. In this house-ship, trust in God fills the sails favorably: the mast, to which the sails are fastened, is the Divine institution of marriage: the anchor is a believing, enduring hope. The ship's tackle is the house-furniture; the freight is all household service; the crew are those who perform it: the sea is the world, the great sea-waves are the many troubles and anxieties which come to the house-folks, in trying to support themselves in honor. The tacking of the ship is the going out and in: the lading and unlading are the expenses and the incomes. Shipwreck is the ruin that comes upon a house, either from dying away of the wind of God, or from the slack, evil sails of mistrust, or from dissipated courses.

The shrouds on the mast are a good conscience; the pennon at the mast-head is faith in God, the compass is the commandments of God. The rudder is Obedience, the figure-head at the prow is the fear and honor of God. The deck is decent life and fidelity of them that serve. Pirates are the devils that disturb married life, and the envious who attack the house-ship. And finally, even as the islands of the sea,—yea, half the world—were not inhabited save for navigation, so lands and places would be desolate, but for the households of marriage. And as unto him who goes to sea the sailing prospers, so he prospers in his household who applies an honest art and skill thereto. Not unjustly do we compare a household to a vessel, since the first house and the first house-keeping, during and after the Deluge, were a ship and in a ship.

Fischart was a man of strong religious and patriotic feelings. In his "Serious Warning to the beloved Germans," he gives a picture of what Germany then was and what she should be, which will apply to the history of the first half of this century. "What honor is it to you," he asks, "that you praise the old Germans because

they fought for their freedom, because they suffered no bad neighbors to molest them? And you disregard your own freedom, you can hardly be secure in your own land, you allow your neighbor to tie his horse, head and tail, to your hedge." Fischart was a native of Elsass, and the neighbor, of course, was France. In another poem, he exclaims: "The flower of freedom is the loveliest blossom! May God let this excellent flower expand in Germany everywhere: then come peace, joy, rest and renown!"

Fischart first introduced the Italian sonnet into German literature. His poetical versions of some of the Psalms more nearly approach Luther's in rugged grandeur than those of any other writer of the time; but his verse lacks the ease and the animation of his prose. As a prose writer, he gives exactly that element to the language which the Reformers could not furnish in their graver works—an element of playful and grotesque humor which does not again appear until we find it in Richter. But Fischart, coming after Luther and profiting by his labors, cannot be called a founder. Had he fallen upon other times—for instance on an age of dramatic literature, like Shakespeare—his great natural powers might have been more broadly and happily developed. As in the case of Wolfram von Eschenbach, we feel that the man must have been greater than his works.

I have mentioned the corruption which came upon the

language about the close of the sixteenth century, and have given you two instances to show that it was grievously felt by men of intelligence. In spite of the continual religious and political agitation, the class of cultivated persons slowly increased: the need of a literary reformation was recognized, and finally, in 1617, a year before the breaking out of the Thirty Years' War, a society was formed, on the model of those Italian literary associations, some of which exist to this day. It was called the "Fruit-bringing Society," or the "Order of the Palm": its chief object was to restore and preserve the purity of the German tongue. It seems like an omen of the future that this society—the first sign of a distinct literary aspiration since the Crusades—should have been founded in the Duchy of Weimar. It was followed by the "Sincere Society of the Pine," in Strasburg, in 1633; the "German-thinking Brotherhood," in Hamburg, in 1643, and various later associations, the objects of which were identical or related. Now, although literature cannot be created by societies, literary influence can be; and it was a member of the Order of the Palm whose example and success made the High-German the exclusive language of poetry, as Luther, a hundred years before, had made it the language of prose.

I allude to Martin Opitz, the founder of what is called the Silesian school. He was born in 1597, some years after Fischart's death, and died in 1639. His short life

was one of such successful labor, when we consider the unfortunate time, that his deserts, on account of what he did for the language, overbalance the harm which he inflicted upon the popular taste by a false system. His prose work, upon the principles of German poetry, written in 1624, declared, in advance, the character of nearly all the poetic literature of the century. His doctrine is, briefly, that the author should use only the pure High-German; that he should draw his themes from Nature, but not describe things as they are, so much as represent them as they might be, or ought to be; and, finally, that his only models should be the classic authors. Opitz seems to have followed the French work of Scaliger, and his views therefore harmonize with that of the French classical school of the time. He was both crowned as a poet and ennobled by the Emperor Ferdinand; he received official stations and honors, and his influence thus became much more extended and enduring than the character of his works would now lead us to suppose. We can scarcely say, in fact, that he was taken down from his lofty pedestal until about the middle of the last century. But the establishment of the literary societies and the example of Opitz certainly saved verse, in those days, from the disgraceful condition into which prose had fallen; for, while the prose writers of the seventeenth century utterly lack the strength and dignity and tenderness and idiomatic picturesqueness of those of the Refor-

mation, either expressing themselves awkwardly and laboriously, or showing the taint of a vulgar dialect, the poets, with all their pedantry and affectation, are always admirably pure in language and careful in diction.

Opitz was a man of the world, with more ambition than principle. A Protestant, he could become the secretary of Count Dohna, who used torture to force Catholicism upon his Silesian vassals; a German, he died in the service of the King of Poland. We could not expect to find the fiery sincerity of a true poet expressed in such a life; and we do not find it in his works. In form and language he is almost perfect: within the limits which he fixed for himself, he displays an exquisite taste, and we cannot come upon his works, directly from those which immediately preceded them, without a sudden surprise and pleasure. Take the two opening stanzas of his poem "To the Germans," which seems to have been inspired by some event of the Thirty Years' War:

Auff, auff, wer Teutsche Freyheit liebet,	Up, now! who German Freedom loveth,
Wer Lust, für Gott zu fechten hat!	And who for God is proud to bleed!
Der Schein, den mancher von sich giebet	Mere show of faith, that many moveth,
Verbringet keine Ritter-that.	Was never nurse of knightly deed!
Wann fug vnd Vrsach ist zu brechen,	When need and cause command decision,

Wan Feind nicht Freund mehr bleiben kan,
Da muss man nur vom Sehen sprechen,
Da zeigt das Hertze seinen Mann.

When former friends as foes we ban,
Then speech must follow clearer vision,
And by his heart we know the man.

Lass die von jhren Kräfften sagen,
Die schwach vnd bloss von Tugend sind:
Mit trotzen wird man Bienen jagen,
Ein Sinn von Ehren, der gewinnt.
Wie gross vnd starck der Feind sich mache,
Wie hoch er schwinge Muth vnd Schwerd,
So glaube doch, die gute Sache
Ist hundert tausend Köpffe werth.

They on their strength may prate reliance
Whose virtue 's weak, and bare, and cold:
'Tis chasing bees to talk defiance,
But Honor wins because 'tis bold!
Though mightily the foe may face us,
And wave a sword that terror spreads,
The cause each true man now embraces
Is worth a hundred thousand heads!

This is almost the German of to-day. The quaint, archaic character of Fischart's verses and Eber's hymns has suddenly disappeared; we hear only familiar words and melodies. From this time forward the language of German poetry is modern, and the authors must be valued according to our present standards. I will quote one other brief lyric of Opitz, as an example of his occasional grace and sweetness:

EILE DER LIEBE.

Ach liebste, lass vns eilen,
Wir haben zeit:
Es schadet das verweilen
Vns beyderseit.

THE HASTE OF LOVE.

Ah, sweetheart, let us hurry!
We still have time.
Delaying thus we bury
Our mutual prime.

Der edlen schönheit Gaben
Fliehn fuss für fuss,
Dass alles, was wir haben,
Verschwinden muss.

Der Wangen Ziehr verbleichet,
Das Haar wird greiss,
Der Augen Fewer weichet,
Die Brunst wird Eiss.

Das Mündlein von Corallen
Wird vngestalt,
Die Hand als Schnee verfallen,
Vnd du wirst alt.

Drumb lass vns jetzt geniessen
Der Jugend Frucht,
Eh' als wir folgen müssen
Der Jahre Flucht.

Wo du dich selber liebest,
So liebe mich!
Gieb mir das, wann du giebest
Verlier auch ich.

Beauty's bright gift shall perish
As leaves grow sere:
All that we have and cherish
Shall disappear.

The cheek of roses fadeth,
Gray grows the head;
And fire the eyes evadeth,
And passion 's dead.

The mouth, love's honeyed winner,
Is formless, cold;
The hand, like snow, gets thinner,
And thou art old!

So let us taste the pleasure
That youth endears,
Ere we are called, to measure
The flying years!

Give, as thou lov'st and livest,
Thy love to me,
Even though, in what thou givest,
My loss should be!

The tendency of the literary societies, like that of the guilds of the Master-singers, was to increase the quantity of aspirants for poetic honors, while unfavorably affecting the quality of their productions. It is probable that the despotism of the French, or pseudo-classical ideas, was as severe, in its way, as the metrical rules of the Masters; but it was a despotism of principles, not of mechanical forms. The number of writers during the century was greater than that of the six-

teenth, and, if we set aside Luther and Fischart from the latter, their average performance was of a higher quality. It appears to be a level which we are crossing, but there is a gradual ascending slope perceptible, if we look a little closer. There is, fortunately, such a radical difference of spirit between the German and the French languages that the power of imitation is limited: the French models could not be reproduced without losing much of their original character. Moreover, the religious element, to some extent, operated against the foreign influence in literature; for, about the middle of the century, the dry theological life which succeeded the Reformation was quickened by a change. Paul Gerhardt, and after him especially Spener, inaugurated a mild, gentle, half ecstatic form of devotion, which infected large classes throughout Germany, and continued to exist and operate in the following century. It was rather a sentiment than an active force; and coming immediately after the misery of the desolating war, it had something of the character of those prayer-meetings which business men hold in Wall Street during a financial crisis, and at no other time; yet it was genuine, and it was wholly German—therefore a good and necessary agency, which operated indirectly upon literature.

The seventeenth century is therefore interesting to us as a field of conflicting influences, and it is curious to see how they sometimes unconsciously existed side

by side. The Order of the Palm, for instance, contained nine noble members to one commoner,—that is, nine who habitually used the French, as a court-language, yet were associated in order to preserve the purity of German! Many of the poets of the Silesian school were nobles; and by the middle of the century the reigning Saxon princes began to imitate the course of their predecessors, four or five hundred years before, in patronizing Literature. The field of letters, which had previously been Suabia, Franconia and the Upper Rhine, was now suddenly transferred to Saxony and Silesia, and all the noted authors of the century were produced there. Fully as many writers appeared as during the age of the Minnesingers, and the proportion of inferior talent is about the same. I must necessarily adopt the same plan in treating of them—select the few who lift themselves above the general level of mediocrity, and let the rest go, for the present. The standard of language and the general character of diction, which Opitz established, were followed by all his successors, and for this reason our study of the age and its irregular growth is greatly lightened.

The next poet, in the order of birth, was Paul Flemming, whose short life, from 1609 to 1640, interests us as much, by its consistent manliness and truth, as we are repelled by the worldliness and want of principle of Martin Opitz. Longfellow, you will remember, gives Paul Flemming's name to the hero of his "Hyperion."

He was a Saxon, the son of a wealthy clergyman. As a young man he was attached to an embassy sent by the Duke of Schleswig-Holstein to Moscow, and immediately after his return, joined the famous embassy to Persia which was described by Olearius. The privations of this journey, which occupied four years, so undermined his health that he died in a year after his return to Germany. He had just taken the degree of Doctor of Medicine at Leyden, had settled in Hamburg, and was preparing for his marriage, when he was called away, leaving a beautiful legacy in his poems. He surpasses Opitz, who was his model, in warmth and tenderness and sincerity of tone. There is less of a cold, hard, exquisite polish manifest in his lines, but they are more simply melodious and fluent. If Opitz, in his manner only, reminds us somewhat of Pope, Flemming has a slight resemblance to Collins. He possesses one quality which was developed by his many years of travel, which distinguishes him from all other writers of his time, and which, had he lived, might have given him a much greater eminence: he had a clear, objective power of looking at the world and the life of men. After the age of twenty-four, but two years of his life were spent in Germany; and he was denied that rest and quiet development which might have emancipated him from the literary fashions in which he was educated. That he would have so emancipated himself I think is certain; for he shows so clear and healthy a vision, so

broad and warm a humanity. His power of description, moreover, was remarkably vigorous and picturesque. The opening of his poem on a cavalry soldier reminds us at once of old George Chapman and of Schiller:

> Ein frischer Heldenmuht ist über alle Schätze,
> Ist über allen Neid: er selbst ist sein Gesetze,
> Sein Mahl, sein Sold, sein Preiss. Er reisset durch die Zeit,
> Vergnüget sich durch sich, lässt bey sich Ruh' und Streit,
> Inn gleicher Waage stehn.

In all that Paul Flemming wrote—in his warlike alexandrines, in his hymns, his sonnets, and in his lyrics and madrigals—I find an equal excellence. For sweetness and a delicate play of fancy, some of his sonnets approach those of Petrarch, and there is more genuine passion in the address to his soul, entitled "Why delayest thou?" than in all Opitz ever wrote. Flemming's poems were first collected and published, two years after his death, by the father of his betrothed bride. The sonnet which he wrote on his death-bed is a good illustration both of his genius and his fine manhood:

Ich war an Kunst und Gut, an Stande gross und reich,	In art, wealth, standing, was I strong and free;
Dess Glückes lieber Sohn, von Eltern guter Ehren,	Of honored parents, fortune's chosen son,
Frey, Meine; kunte mich aus meinen Mitteln nehren;	Free, and mine own, and mine own substance won;
Mein shall floh überweit: kein Landsmann sang mir gleich;	I woke far echoes,—no one sang like me;

Von reisen hochgepreist; für keiner Mühe bleich;
Jung, wachsam, unbesorgt. Man wird mich nennen hören,
Biss dass die lezte Glut diss alles wird verstören.
Diss, Deutsche Klarien, diss gantze danck ich Euch!
Verzeiht mirs, bin ichs werth, Gott, Vater, Liebste, Freunde?
Ich sag Euch gute Nacht und trete willig ab:
Sonst alles ist gethan biss an das schwartze Grab.
Was frey dem Tode steht, das thu er seinem Feinde!
Was bin ich viel besorgt, den Othem auffzugeben?
An mir ist minder nichts, das lebet, als mein Leben!

Praised for my travels, toiling cheerfully,
Young, watchful, eager, — named for what I've done,
Till the last sands of earthy time be run.
This, German Muses, was your legacy!
God, Father, Dearest, Friends, is my worth so?
I say good night, and now must disappear:
The black grave waits, all else is finished here:
What Death may do, that do he to his foe!
To yield my breath shall bring me little strife:
There's naught of life in me that less lives than my life!

I give one more example, for the sake of its brief strength and grace:

Lass dich nur nichts nicht tauren
mit trauren!
Sey stille!
Wie Gott es fügt,
So sey vergnügt,
Mein Wille!

My soul, no dark depression borrow
From sorrow!
Be still!
As God disposeth now,
Be cheerful thou,
My will!

Was wilst du heute sorgen
auff morgen?
der eine
steht allem für;
Der giebt auch dir
das deine!

To-day, why wilt thou trouble borrow,
For to-morrow?
One alone
Careth for all that be:
He'll give to thee
Thine own!

Sey nur in allen Handel
ohn Wandel,
Steh' feste!
Was Gott beschleust,
das ist und heisst
das beste.

Stand, then, whatever 's undertaken,
Unshaken!
Lift up thy breast!
Whatso thy God ordains,
Is and remains
The best!

Paul Flemming is another instance, like Schiller and Burns and Charles Lamb, where the quality of the author's character becomes a part of his fame. One who knows nothing of his personal history will feel his nature in his works. I should like to linger longer in his company, but the mild eyes of Simon Dach, the huge wig of Gryphius, and the modest dignity of Friedrich von Logau's attitude warn me that we are not yet halfway through the century.

Of Simon Dach there is little to be said. He was born on the eastern verge of Germany, at Memel, in the beginning of the century, passed the greater part of his life as Professor of Poetry at the University of Königsberg, and died in 1659. He was a follower of the Silesian school, and a writer of many hymns which combine correctness of form with sincere devotional feeling. His natural tendency seems to have been to imitate the *Volkslieder*, or common songs of the people, and how narrowly he missed an original place in literature may be seen from the popularity of his song "*Anke von Tharaw*," which every German knows and sings at this day. It is written in the Low-German of Eastern

Prussia. The tradition says that Annie of Tharaw was betrothed to him and then left him for another, whereupon he wrote the tender ballad as a piece of bitter irony; but the same story is told of the authorship of our familiar Scotch ballad, "Annie Lawrie," and is perhaps untrue in both cases. The feeling, in both the Scotch and the Low-German ballad, is very similar, as you will notice, and the melodies attached to both are as tender as the words. I will give you the original, and Longfellow's admirable translation:

Anke von Tharaw öss, de my geföllt,
Se öss mihn Lewen, mihn Goet on mihn Gölt.

Anke von Tharaw hefft wedder eer Hart
Op my geröchtet ön Löw 'on ön Schmart.

Anke von Tharaw mihn Rikhdom, mihn Goet,
Du mihne Seele, mihn Fleesch on mihn Bloet!

Quöm allet Wedder glihk ön ons tho schlahn,
Wy syn gesönnt, by een anger tho stahn.

Kranckheit, Berfälgung, Bedröfnös on Pihn,
Sal vnsrer Löve, Vernöttinge syn.

Annie of Tharaw, my true love of old,
She is my life, and my goods, and my gold.

Annie of Tharaw, her heart once again
To me has surrendered in joy and in pain.

Annie of Tharaw, my riches, my good,
Thou, O my soul, my flesh, and my blood!

Then come the wild weather, come sleet or come snow,
We will stand by each other however it blow.

Oppression, and sickness, and sorrow, and pain
Shall be to our true love as links to the chain.

Recht as een Palmen-Bohm äver söck stöcht,
Je mehr en Hagel on Regen anföcht;

So wardt de Löw' ön ons mächtich on groht,
Dörch Kryhtz, dörch Lyden, dörch allerley Noht.

Wördest du glihk een mal von my getrennt,
Leewdest dar, wor öm dee Sönne kuhm kennt;

Eck wöll dy fülgen dörch Wöler, dörch Mär,
Dörch Yhss, dörch Ihsen, dörch fihndlöcket Hähr.

Anke von Tharaw, mihn Licht, mihne Sönn,
Mihn Leven schlucht öck ön dihnet henönn.

Wat öck geböde, wart van dy gedahn,
Wat öck verböde, dat lätstu my stahn.

Wat heft de Löve däch ver een Bestand,
Wor nich een Hart öss, een Mund, eene Hand?

Wor öm söck hartaget, kabbelt on schleyht,
On glihk den Hungen on Katten begeyht.

As the palm-tree standeth so straight and tall,
The more the hail beats, and the more the rains fall,—

So love in our hearts shall grow mighty and strong,
Through crosses, through sorrows, through manifold wrong.

Shouldst thou be torn from me to wander alone,
In a desolate land where the sun is scarce known,—

Through forests I'll follow, and where the sea flows,
Through ice, and through iron, through armies of foes.

Annie of Tharaw, my light and my sun,
The threads of our two lives are woven in one.

Whate'er I have bidden thee thou hast obeyed,
Whatever forbidden thou hast not gainsaid.

How in the turmoil of life can love stand,
Where there is not one heart, and one mouth, and one hand?

Some seek for dissension, and trouble, and strife;
Like a dog and a cat live such man and wife.

Anke von Tharaw, dat war wy nich dohn,
Du böst myn Dyhfken, myn Schahpken, mihn Hohn.

Wat öck begehre, begehrest du ohk,
Eck laht den Rock dy, du hätst my de Brohk.

Dit öss dat, Anke, du söteste Ruh,
Een Lihf on Seele wart uht öck on Du.

Dit mahckt dat Lewen tom Hämmlischen Rihk,
Dörch Zanken wart et der Hellen gelihk.

Annie of Tharaw, such is not our love;
Thou art my lambkin, my chick, and my dove.

Whate'er my desire is, in thine may be seen;
I am king of the household, and thou art its queen.

It is this, O my Annie, my heart's sweetest rest,
That makes of us twain but one soul in one breast.

This turns to a heaven the hut where we dwell;
While wrangling soon changes a home to a hell.

We cannot wonder that the peasant-poets were silent during this century. The people had suffered too sorely to sing much else than those devotional poems, in which they were directed to find consolation. This was the greatest misfortune bequeathed by the Thirty Years' War—that the nobles, as a class, soon repaired their losses and enjoyed their former state, while the people were so bruised and crippled, so weak and destitute of the means of recovering their strength, that their material condition was probably worse, and their opportunities for development less, than under the Hohenstaufen Emperors. The war lasted so long that it finally educated its own soldiery, from whose brutal character no decent song of battle could be expected. A later generation, at the end of the century, gave us

one song, or rather ballad of war, which has outlived all the others of the time — the well-known "*Prinz Eugenius, der edle Ritter*," which celebrates the bravery of Prince Eugene of Savoy at the battle of Belgrade. The fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries were much more prolific in folk-songs, and they were of a better literary character than those of the seventeenth century.

Returning to the Silesian school, we find that the first important successor of Opitz was Andreas Gryphius, also a Silesian, born in 1616. He was well educated, a remarkable philologist for his time, familiar with the classical and Oriental languages and all the living tongues of Europe; he traveled for two years, visiting Italy and England, became Syndic of Glogau, his native place, and died in 1664. Gryphius must be placed below Opitz as a lyric poet, although in form and finish he is an equal; but he did not create a school, like the latter. He only obeyed the laws which had been already adopted. His poetry has a melancholy, almost a dreary character: his favorite themes were churchyards, death, and rest after troubles. But he deserves to be specially mentioned as a dramatic author. He was the first to elevate the dramatic literature of Germany, which, up to this time, seems to have been chiefly modeled on the puppet plays and miracle plays. As a good English scholar, Gryphius had the highest models, and one of his comedies, "*Peter Squenze*," gives tolerably clear evidence that he was acquainted with Shake-

speare. It is true that Peter Quince of the "Midsummer Night's Dream" was already known in Germany, as a character, through the English traveling actors; but Gryphius imitates the device of a play within a play, from the "Pyramus and Thisbe" of Shakespeare. His tragedies of "*Leo Armenius*," "*Papinian*" and "*Karl Stuart*" are declamatory and grandiloquent, somewhat like those of Dryden's famous rival, Elkanah Settle; but they at least inaugurated in Germany a much better character of dramatic art. In this respect, we must give Gryphius a similar credit to that which we have given to Opitz: he advanced the literary standard of his day. After the models which they furnished,—the one in purity of language and the external structure of verse, the other in the dramatic treatment of a proper subject,—no author dared to return to the imperfect standard of previous times. There was thus a general advance of skill and taste, in spite of the adherence to a false system. We see something similar in the phenomena of our American literature at the present day. But the "sensational" element, as it is called, which has crept into English and American literature, is even worse in its effect on the mental habits of the people than was the affected classicism of the seventeenth century; for it goes beyond "the modesty of nature," instead of falling below it.

With Andreas Gryphius the first Silesian school came to an end. Vilmar, in his history of the period, gives

some curious examples of its affectations, and some of them remind us of similar features in the English literature of the last century. Where the earliest German poets used simple substantives, as night, the forest, the sea, the mediæval authors added the most obvious adjectives, as *dark* night, the *greenwood*, the *blue* sea. The Silesians made a deliberate chase after elegant and original words, and the discovery of a new adjective was a cause of rejoicing to the brotherhoods of the Palm and the Pine. Thus, *black* evening was first adopted; but presently some fortunate poet hit upon *brown*, and all evenings were brown, to the end of the century. You will find the same word, applied to evening and shade, by Gray and Collins; and morning, you will notice, was nearly always *purple* in the last century. In the sensational school, now-a-days, all things are opal, topaz, emerald or ruby; and it is doubtful whether we can get any farther. Opitz established the fashion: he made all tears *salt*, all water *glassy*, all north-stars *cold*, for his followers. The earth, according to his mood, was either a *great* round, a *beautiful* round or a *desolate* round. Addison calls it a "terrestrial ball," and Tennyson styles the moon "an argent round."

Now, you can readily imagine that after Opitz and Gryphius had been accepted as models, their later followers, being utterly deficient in original genius, knew nothing else to do but to copy and exaggerate their most obvious characteristics. This is, in fact, the distinction

of what is called the second Silesian school. It rose into existence, toward the end of the century, under the leadership of two noblemen, Hoffmanswaldau and Lohenstein. Let me give you a single specimen from the first of these, and I think you will require no further illustration of the character of the school: "Your countenance gives strength and light to the stars. The year has four seasons, you but one, for the spring always blossoms on your lips. Winter does not approach you, and the sun is hardly permitted to shine beside the beam of your eyes. You carry virtue in a splendid purple dish, ornamented, as it seems, with white ivory: your mouth is the retreat of a thousand nightingales, and the tongues of angels beg to be admitted therein as servants." Add to such stuff as this the mechanical jingle of Siegmund von Birken—whom Southey seems to have imitated in his "Falls of Lodore,"—the tiresome melodies of Christian Gryphius, the literary son of his father Andreas, and the blood-and-thunder tragedies of Lohenstein, and we cannot help feeling that the only use of this second Silesian school was to create such a disgust with the system, that a reaction must inevitably follow. So, in England, the bombast and nonsense of the aristocratic writers, of exactly the same period, was followed by the revival of Queen Anne's time.

This is the translation of a passage from Siegmund von Birken, which may have suggested the tinkling music in the "Falls of Lodore":

WELCOME TO SPRING.

They're glancing, entrancing and dancing,
The blossoming meadows;
While gleameth, and beameth, and streameth
The dew in the shadows.
They're spreading, and wedding, and shedding,
The freshly-leaved branches;
And rustle, and hustle with bustle
The wind as it launches.
They spring out, and sing out, and ring out,
The pipes in their blowing;
In daytime the playtime of May-time
The shepherds are showing.

But there was one man, also a Silesian, yet standing as much alone as Milton, and Dryden after him, whose works are as the shadow of a rock in a weary land. This is Friedrich von Logau, another of the neglected minds who first received recognition and critical justice from Lessing. He was born in 1604, educated at Brieg, in Silesia, where he was a page in the house of the reigning Duke, and afterward, having studied jurisprudence, an official in the chancery of the Duchy. He was poor, dependent on a small salary, and his life was one of toil and trouble. A complete collection of his aphorisms, epigrams and lyric poems was published under the name of Salomon von Golaw, in 1654, and in the following year he died. Five or six years before his death, he was elected a member of the Order of the Palm; but he seems to have had very little intercourse with the other Silesian members, and his works show only slight traces of the influence of the school.

Friedrich von Logau is a noble character, in whatever aspect we consider him. He was an earnest thinker in a thoughtless time; he was a strong, believing, aspiring soul, a man of steadfast integrity and virtue, in an age of lawlessness and vice. His possessions were wasted by the terrible war; Wallenstein's troops overran the Duchy, and left a trail of barbarism behind them; but nothing could shake his inherent goodness and bravery for the sake of good. The thousand brief aphorisms which he has left were written as they came to him during a period of twenty-five years of labor: they are simply the necessary recreation of his mind. The governing principle of his life was to do his nearest duty, and he only gave to letters the time which he could spare from his office and the care of his family. The following couplet of Logau, which is almost proverbial to-day, will be readily recognized in Longfellow's translation:

Gottes Mühlen mahlen langsam, mahlen aber trefflich klein;	Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;
Ob aus Langmut er sich säumet, bringt mit Schärf' er alles ein.	Though with patience he stands waiting, with exactness grinds he all.

This image of a mill seems to have been a favorite with him. I find the following satirical allusion to some one of his acquaintance:

> Fungus' mouth is like a mill, and as fast as ever ran;
> For each handful wit it grinds, there's a bushel wordy bran.

Here is another:

A mill-stone and the human heart are whirled forever round:
Where either nothing has to grind, it must itself be ground.

This is the general character of Logau's aphorisms—brief, pithy, witty, but with an underlying tone, either of wisdom, or satire, or faith, or tenderness. Many of his couplets or verses have strayed away from him, and are used at this day by thousands who never guess whence they came. I remember that when I first traveled on foot through Germany, I often saw these lines in the *Stammbücher*, or albums, of the traveling journeymen whom I met on the highways:

Hoffnung ist ein fester Stab,
Und Geduld ein Reisekleid,
Da man mit durch Welt und Grab
Wandelt in die Ewigkeit.

These lines I afterward found in Logau's aphorisms. Like all genuine, thinking brains, his pages are full of suggestions of the expressions of later and more fortunate authors. Goethe says: "Es irrt der Mensch, so lang er strebt," but Logau had said before him—"Dass ich irre, bleibt gewiss, alldieweil ein Mensch ich bin." Logau wrote:

"Frühling ist des Jahres Rose; Rosen sind des Frühlings Zier;
Und der Rosen Rosenfürstin seyd und heisset billig Ihr';"

and two hundred years after him Tennyson wrote:

"Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Queen lily and rose in one."

The modern German poet Rückert says: "Repetition is compensation for the transitory bliss"—and we find in Logau "The best nourishment of pleasure is repeated pleasure." I might extend this list of correspondences, and thus prove, backward, the genuine quality of Logau's genius. There could be no greater contrast than between the members of the second Silesian school, with their thin and weak pretense of ideas, their inflated diction and deluge of interminable works, and this hard-working, lonely, modest man, crowding his honest thought and sound reflection into a few brief lines, and giving them to the world under an assumed name. He might have furnished not only all of them, but also the devotional poets, Gerhard and Franck, with a better material than they found. There are several sermons and hymns compressed into these four lines of Logau:

Menschlich ist es, Sünde treiben;
Teuflisch ist 's, in Sünden bleiben;
Christlich ist es, Sünde hassen;
Göttlich ist es, Sünd' erlassen.

During the whole of the seventeenth century, there is no prose which at all approaches that of Luther in simplicity and strength. We find, it is true, that the provincialism of the writers,—the marks of their particular dialects,—begin to disappear, and the pure High-German, under the influence of the literary societies, is gradually gaining ground; but the popular sources from which Luther drew so much are neglected. Both

Silesian schools, but especially the second, operated unfavorably upon the prose style of the day. Opitz and Gryphius taught a hard, cold, formal manner, whereby the language loses much of its native life and warmth, and the second school was such a mixture of affectation and bombast, that many of its productions now seem to us to be intentional parodies of their authors. Lohenstein's romance of "Arminius and Thusnelda," covering nearly 3,000 quarto pages, printed in double columns, is simply monstrous: we marvel that an individual should commit, or a public endure, such an overwhelming offense. But we remember how our own ancestors were fascinated with Clarissa Harlow, and how the German public of to-day reads the nine volumes and 4,000 pages of Gutzkow's "*Zauberer von Rom.*"

The best prose work of the time is certainly Grimmelhausen's "*Simplicissimus,*" which bears nearly the same relation to the pompous romances of the Silesian authors as Fielding to Richardson. It is a story of common life, told in bare, clear, racy language, and with the same fresh realism which we find in "Tom Jones" and "Joseph Andrews." Next in value I should rank the homilies and didactic writings of the monk Abraham à Santa Clara, which are also simple in tone, and really effective because they betray no straining after effect. Zinkgref's historical sketches, the travels of Olearius, and the orations of Baron Canitz, have, at least, the merit of being tolerable where nearly all is positively

bad. We can only say that the average performance of the prose writers is higher at the close than it was at the beginning of the century. The language by this time was sufficiently developed, and the excellences and faults of its literature so abundantly manifested, that it was ready for the use of better intellects. These came, soon afterward, in Haller and Hagedorn and Gellert—then followed the first master-mind of the great modern period, Lessing.

In studying this long and interrupted intellectual history of the German race, we must beware of confining our interest to individual authors, or even to particular eras. This seventeenth century, which we have been considering, becomes a tedious field of research if we separate it from the centuries before and after it. Each author must be judged, first, in relation to his own time, and the temporary influences which gave character to his works; then, by the absolute standard of achievement, by his contribution to the permanent elements of growth in his country and in the world. Unless we acquire this latter and broader habit of vision, we may fail to see the true meaning of many lives, the true importance of many historical periods; and we shall surely derive from the general survey one lesson which might escape us if we looked only to particulars—one lesson of the greatest value to every young American whose tastes or talents lead him toward literature:—that nothing is more delusive than the fashion of the

day: that the immediate popularity of a work is no test whatever of its excellence: that the writer who consults the general moods or likings of the public is never likely to achieve genuine and permanent success:—while he who considers only the truth of his thought, the simplicity and clearness of its expression, and its probable value to all humanity, may seem to be disparaged or neglected for a time, but shall surely be acknowledged by that everlasting, lofty intelligence of men which is above all fleeting fashions of literature.

VII.

LESSING.

We now reach a period where the language is wholly modern. We find no difference, except in style and habit of thought, between the authors of Queen Anne's time and those of our own day: so our German brother finds no greater difference between the present and the authors who were born one hundred and fifty years ago. From this period, we are able to contrast and compare the two languages, as they are now spoken, and thus to appreciate intelligently the two literatures.

Instead of giving a general historical survey of modern German Literature, I shall take up, in the order of their lives, the six most prominent authors, and, by describing them and their works separately, give you, through them, a picture of the times in which they lived. They are—Lessing, Klopstock, Wieland, Herder, Schiller and Goethe. The great era of German Literature, which they created, corresponds to the Augustan in Rome and the Elizabethan in England—an era which commenced about the middle of the last century, and terminated, with the death of Goethe, in the year 1832. Within the prescribed limits, it will not be possible to give a complete

history of the period; because, more than the literature of any other language, that of Germany, on account of the larger culture of its creative minds, is connected with the contemporary literature of the rest of Europe. We cannot dissociate it, as we can that of England and of France, from the influence of foreign thought and the literary fashions prevalent in other countries. But the life of every author, who has shared in shaping the development of his generation, always reflects, in an individual form, the influences which affect the class to which he speaks, since he must admit them and take them into account, although he himself may remain comparatively independent. I hope, therefore, that an account of the men who have created the modern literature of Germany will, at the same time, enable us to estimate the character of that literature, and its importance as an element of human development.

One who is familiar with the German language will have little difficulty in selecting the characteristics which distinguish the literature of Germany from that of other nations. You are aware that the German language is subtle, rich and involved in its structure; while the English, with an even greater flexibility, generally remains realistic, simple and direct. These prominent characteristics repeat themselves in the two literatures, for speech and thought have a reciprocal influence. A great genius partly forces the language he uses to adapt itself to his own intellectual quality, and he is partly

forced by the language to submit his intellect to its laws. Apart from this circumstance, however, the natural tendency of a German author is to express himself in accordance with an intellectual system, which he has discovered or imagined, and adopted as his own; while the English author, if he be honest, is more concerned for the thing he expresses, and its effect, than for its fitness as a part of any such system. In the private correspondence of the German authors, we find their works reciprocally analyzed, according to the literary principles of each; their conceptions are tested by abstract laws; and felicities of expression, which an English critic usually notices first, are with them a secondary interest.

Now, where such theories, or systems, harmonize with the eternal canons of Literary Art—and of *all* Art, the key to which may be given in three words, Elevation, Proportion, Repose—they help, not hinder, the author's best development. Goethe, Lessing and Schiller are illustrious examples of this. But where the system reflects some special taste, some strong personal tendency, as in the cases of Klopstock, Wieland and Richter, it carries its own limitations along with it. The author who allows himself to be thus circumscribed, may become ruler over some fair province of literature, but he cannot belong to the reigning line of the kingdom.

This tendency, perhaps, explains the fact that German literature seems to reflect a greater range of intellectual

and spiritual experience than ours. It is more frank, intimate and confidential—sometimes to a degree which is almost repellant to Anglo-Saxon reserve; for the author is less careful to conceal the operations of his mind;—it touches the nature of man on many sides, and endeavors to illuminate all the aspects of life. The theoretic tendencies of its authors do little harm, for they counteract each other—nay, they often do good by substituting a fashion of thought for the narrower form of a fashion in expression.

During the whole of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth, as I have already said, the literary history of Germany may almost be compared to a desert. The annals of scarcely any other modern nation show such a long period of barrenness. But early in the last century, Gleim and Gellert were born —two authors who seem to have been destined to stand between the waste that went before and the harvest which followed. They are thus important or insignificant, according to the side from which we look at them. But, even before they had reached their productive activity, greater minds were in the world. In the year 1724, Klopstock was born; in 1729, Lessing; in 1733, Wieland; in 1744, Herder; in 1749, Goethe; in 1759, Schiller, and in 1762, Richter. Every six years a new name, destined to be an independent, victorious, permanent power.

Great men never come upon an age entirely unpre-

pared to receive them. The secret influences which culminated in a fierce social and political crisis, toward the end of the century, were already at work, and there must have been a large class of receptive minds capable of sustaining those which were born to create. For these latter, however, a season of struggle was certain. There is a vast difference between the silent and the spoken protest. The courts, the universities and the clergy, at that time, held a despotic sway over opinion and taste. The young author made haste to secure his titled patron, and paid by flattery for the little freedom of expression which he was allowed to exercise. We can best measure the stagnation of the period, and its general subservience to authority, by the angry excitement which followed every attempt at literary independence. The richest gifts were repelled; the ways to larger liberty were closed as fast as they were opened; and the present glory of the German race was for a long time resisted as if it were a shame.

The man who first broke a clear, broad path out of this wilderness was Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. I choose him first because he was the true pioneer of German thought—because his life was "a battle and a march"—a long and bitter fight for truth, tolerance and freedom. If his greatest merits seem to have been overshadowed for a time by the achievements of others, they come all the more clearly to light in that distance of time which gives us the true perspective of men. We

see him now as he was, an unshaken hero of literature, always leading a forlorn hope, always armed to the teeth, always confident of the final victory. I know of no finer instance of justified self-reliance than is furnished by his life.

He was born in Camenz, a small Saxon town, where his father was a clergyman of scanty means and of a severe and stubborn nature. Being the eldest son, it was meant that he should follow his father's calling. At the age of twelve he was sent to school at Meissen, and three years afterward to the University of Leipzig. But even as a boy he asserted his independence, entirely neglecting theological studies, and devoting himself to languages, literature and the drama. The dictator in literary matters in Leipzig, at that time, was Gottsched,—a man of some ability, but pedantic, conventional and arrogant to the last degree. The boy Lessing was one of the first to dispute his authority. He became a contributor to literary journals, writing anacreontic lyrics or stinging criticisms, according to his mood, and in his eighteenth year completed a comedy, "*Der junge Gelehrte*" (The Young Savant), which was performed soon afterward. Even at that age, he recognized clearly the characteristics of French and of English literature, and became a partisan for the latter, in order to resist the French influence which was then so powerful in Germany. In a short time, he stood almost alone: there were few hands (or, at least, pens) that were not raised

against him. So poor that he was barely able to live, he was called immoral and profligate; his contempt of the reigning pedantry was ascribed to a barbaric want of taste; and his refusal to devote himself to theology was set down as atheism. The slanders prevalent in Leipzig reached his home, and were followed by angry or reproachful letters from his father. The patience and the good sense with which he endured these troubles are remarkable in one so young. In one of his letters, he quotes from Plautus the words of a father who is discontented with his son; in another, referring to his refusal to become a clergyman, he says boldly: "Religion is not a thing which a man should accept in simple faith and obedience from his parents,"—meaning that it must be developed through the aspiration of the individual soul.

In his twenty-first year, Lessing went to Berlin, where he succeeded in supporting himself by literary labor. He made the acquaintance of Moses Mendelssohn, Ramler and the poets Gleim and Von Kleist, and his mind began to develop rapidly and vigorously in a fresher and freer intellectual atmosphere. Notwithstanding his scanty earnings, he managed to collect a valuable library, and to contribute small sums from time to time for the education of his younger brothers. In the year 1755 his play of "*Miss Sara Sampson*" was completed. It was modeled on the English drama, and, as the German stage up to that time had been governed entirely by French ideas, it was a sudden and violent

innovation, the success of which was not assured until ten years later, when Lessing produced "*Minna von Barnhelm.*" The English authors of Queen Anne's time—especially Swift, Steele, Addison and Pope—had an equal share with the Greek and Latin classics in determining the character of his labors. He was also a careful student of Shakespeare and of Milton, and seems to have caught from them something of the compact strength of his style.

After ten years, passed partly in Wittenberg, but mostly in Berlin, Lessing became the secretary of General Tauenzien, and in 1760 followed the latter to Breslau, where he remained five years. During this time he wrote "*Minna von Barnhelm*" and "*Laocoon*" (or the Limits of Poetry and Painting), which was published in 1766. The great era of German literature commenced with these works. The "*Laocoon*" in its style, in its equal subtlety and clearness, in its breadth of intellectual vision, was a work the like of which had not been seen before. It was above popularity, because it appealed only to the finest minds; but its lessons sank deeply into one mind—that of the young Goethe, then a student at Leipzig—and set it in the true path.

The remainder of Lessing's history is soon told. He spent two more years in Berlin, living from hand to mouth, and then accepted the proposition to go to Hamburg, and assist in establishing a new theatre. The experiment failed, and he thereupon made another. He

took a partner, and commenced the printing and publishing business upon an entirely new plan; but as neither he nor his partner had any practical knowledge of printing, they failed wretchedly in a year or two. In 1770, Lessing, aged forty-one, found himself penniless, deeply in debt, his library of six thousand volumes scattered to the winds, his father writing to him for money, and his sister reproaching him with being a heartless and undutiful son. But during those three years in Hamburg he had written his "*Dramaturgie*," a work second in importance only to his "*Laocoon*."

The Duke of Brunswick offered him the post of librarian at Wolfenbüttel, with a salary of six hundred thalers (about four hundred and fifty dollars!) a year, and thenceforth his wandering life ceased. He visited Mannheim and Vienna, and accompanied the hereditary Duke of Brunswick on a journey to Italy; but travel seems to have left little impression upon his mind. In the two or three letters from Italy, written to his betrothed wife, there is nothing about either the country or the antique sculpture, concerning which he had previously written so much. He married in 1776, lost his wife and child in a little more than a year, and then lived as before entirely for literature. The two short letters which he wrote to his friend Eschenburg, after the death of his child and wife, are wonderful expressions of the strength and tenderness of the man. I know not where to find, in all the literature of the

world, such tragic pathos expressing itself in the commonest words. He does not say what he feels, but we feel it all the more.

On the 3d of January, 1778, he writes:

> I seize the moment when my wife lies utterly unconscious, to thank you for your sympathy. My happiness was only too short. And it was so hard to lose him, this son of mine! For he had so much understanding—*so much understanding!* Do not think that the few hours of my fatherhood have made me a very ape of a father! I know what I am saying. Was it not understanding that he came so unwillingly to the world?—that he so soon saw its unreason? Was it not understanding that he grasped the first chance of leaving it again? To be sure, the little fidget-head takes his mother with him, and from me!—for there is little hope that I may keep her. I thought I might be even as fortunate as other men; but it has turned out ill for me.

Just one week afterward he wrote to Eschenburg: "My wife is dead; now I have also had this experience. I am glad that no other experience of the kind remains for me to endure—and am quite easy." His "*Nathan der Weise*"—the only one of his works which has been translated and published in this country—appeared in 1779, and in 1781 he died, at the age of fifty-two.

The closing years of his life were embittered by a violent theological controversy, and the enmity which it excited against him was no doubt a cause of the slight success which his last great work, "Nathan the Wise," attained. He had not even the consolation of knowing that the seed he had sown was vital, and had

already germinated. It was a sad ending of a singularly cheerful and courageous life.

In the biographies of authors, we do not always find that genius rests on a strong basis of character. There are many instances where we approve the mind, and condemn the man. But Lessing's chief intellectual quality was a passion for truth, so earnest and unswerving, that we cannot help expecting to find it manifested in the events of his life; and we shall not be disappointed. Whatever faults may have been his, he was always candid, honest, honorable and unselfish. He lived at a time when a very little tact and pliancy of nature might have greatly advanced his fortunes—when a little prudent reticence, now and then, would have saved him from many an angry denunciation. But he seems never to have concerned himself with anything beyond his immediate needs. "All that a man wants, is health," he once wrote: "why should I trouble myself about the future? What would be privation to many is a sufficiency to me." In one of his earlier poems, he says: "Fame never sought me, and would not, in any case, have found me. I have never craved riches, for why, during this short journey, where so little is needed, should one hoard it up for thieves rather than himself? In a little while I shall be trampled under the feet of those who come after. Why need they know upon whom they tread? I alone know who I am." This self-reliant spirit, without vanity,

only asserting itself when its independence must be maintained, is very rare among men. Lessing understood the character and extent of his own power so well, even as a young man, that all his utterances have a stamp of certainty, which is as far as possible from egotism.

We must bear in mind the fact that, when he began to write, literature was not much else than a collection of lifeless forms; that government still clung to the ideas of the Middle Ages, and that religion had, for the most part, degenerated into rigid doctrine. Lessing's position was that of a rebel, at the start. It was impossible for him to breathe the same atmosphere with the dogmatists of his day, and live. His first volume of poems, chiefly imitations of the amorous lyrics of the ancients, gave the opportunity for an attack upon his moral character. In replying to his father, who seems to have joined in the denunciation, he says: "The cause of their existence is really nothing more than my inclination to attempt all forms of poetry." He then adds: "Am I so very wrong in selecting for my youthful labor something whereon very few of my countrymen have tried their skill? And would it not be foolish in me to discontinue, until I have produced a master-piece?"

Lessing's critical articles, which he began to write during his first residence in Berlin, and especially his "Letters on Literature," soon made him respected and

feared, although they gained him few friends beyond the circle of his personal associates. Industry, combined with a keen intellectual insight, had made him an admirable practical scholar, and few men ever better knew how to manage their resources. His style, as I have said, was somewhat colored by his study of the English language. It is clear, keen and bright, never uncertain or obscure. Like the sword of Saladin it cuts its way through the finest web of speculation. He had neither reverence for names, nor mercy for pretensions, and no mind of looser texture than his own could stand before him. I know of no critical papers in any literature, at once so brilliant and so destructive. They would have had a more immediate and a wider effect, but for the fact that his antagonists represented the general sentiment of the time, which could not be entirely suppressed in them. Yet his principles of criticism were broader than mere defense and counter-attack. To Pastor Lange, who complains of his "tone" toward him, he answers: "If I were commissioned as a Judge in Art, this would be my scale of tone: gentle and encouraging for the beginners; admiring with doubt, or doubting with admiration, for the masters; positive and repellant for the botchers; scornful for the swaggerers; and as bitter as possible for the intriguers. The Judge in Art, who has but one tone for all, had better have none."

Unfortunately, he had few opportunities of expressing

either admiration or encouragement. He never failed to recognize the merits of Moses Mendelssohn, Klopstock, Wieland and Herder; but they were authors who stood in little need of his aid. They did not set themselves in immediate antagonism to the fashion of the age. Their growth out of it, and into an independent literary activity, was more gradual; consequently, each of them acquired, almost at the start, a circle of admirers and followers. But Lessing marched straight forward, looking neither to the right nor to the left, indifferent what prejudices he shocked, or upon whom he set his feet. Having, as he conceived, the great minds of Greece, Rome and England as his allies in the Past, he was content to stand alone in the Present. His criticism was positive as well as negative: he not only pointed out the prevalent deficiencies in taste and knowledge, but he laid down the law which he felt to have been violated, and substituted the true for the false interpretation.

I do not think that Lessing's biographers have fully recognized the extent of his indebtedness to English authors. It has been remarked that his epigrammatic poems read like stiff translations from the classics: to me they suggest the similar performances of Swift and Herrick. The three plays by which he revolutionized the German stage—"*Miss Sara Sampson*," "*Minna von Barnhelm*," and "*Emilia Galotti*,"—were constructed upon English models. With them the drama of ordinary

life was introduced into Germany. They have kept their place to this day, and are, even now, more frequently performed than the plays of Goethe. Although they possess little poetic merit, they are so admirably constructed, with so much regard to the movement of the plot and its cumulative development, that they have scarcely been surpassed by any later dramatic author. Even Goethe declares that it is impossible to estimate their influence on dramatic literature.

The "*Laocoon*," although a piece of positive criticism, seems to have been negatively inspired by an English book which has long been forgotten. Joseph Spense, whose "Anecdotes" of Pope and others still survives, published in 1747 a work entitled, "Polymetis,"—a comparison of the poetry and the art of the ancients, in which he took the ground that they illustrate each other —in other words, that they represent the same events. Lessing, whose interest in classic art had been greatly stimulated by the labors of Winckelmann, was led to examine the subject—to contrast ancient art with ancient literature, and ascertain whether indeed they were only different modes of presenting the same subject, as Spense asserted, or whether each had its own separate and peculiar sphere of existence. The description of the fate of Laocoon and his sons, in Virgil, and the famous group of sculpture, mentioned by Pliny (now in the museum of the Vatican, at Rome), furnished him with a text, and gave the title to his work; but from

this starting-point he rises to the investigation of the nature of Poetry and Art, as methods of expression, and the laws which govern them. Where Gottsched and his school furnished patterns of versification, by which men should be able to write mechanical poetry, Lessing revealed the intellectual law, without which all verse is but a lifeless jingle, dreary to the ears of men, and prohibited by the gods.

The opening sentences of the "*Laocoon*" will give you some idea of the clearness and precision of the author's mind. He begins thus:

> The first person who compared Poetry and Painting with each other, was a man of sensitive perception, who felt that both arts affected him in a similar manner. Both, he perceived, represent absent objects as present, substitute the appearance for the reality; both are illusive, yet their illusions give pleasure.
>
> A second man endeavored to penetrate to the source and secret of this pleasure, and discovered that in both cases it flows from the same fountain. Beauty, the conception of which we first derive from material objects, has its universal laws, which apply to many things—to action and thought, as well as to form.
>
> A third man, reflecting upon the value and the application of these eternal laws, perceived that certain of them are predominant in painting, certain others in poetry; and that, therefore, through the latter, Poetry may come to the illustration of Painting; through the former Painting may illustrate Poetry, by means of elucidation and example.
>
> The first of these men was the lover; the second, the philosopher; the third, the critic.

Lessing then proceeds to show that a mere copy of a natural object, no matter how admirably made, does not constitute painting, and that mere description does

not constitute poetry. In both cases the higher element of beauty is necessary, and this element can only exist under certain conditions. For instance, Poetry may express continuous action, but Art can only express suspended action. Poetry may represent the successive phases of passion, Art only a single phase at a time. The agents of form and color assist the representation, in one case; the agency of sound in the other.

I can best give Lessing's definition of the two arts—which is at the same time a distinction between them—in his own words. He says:

> Objects, which either in themselves or their parts, exist in combination, are called *bodies*. Therefore bodies, with their visible characteristics, are the proper subjects of painting.
>
> Objects, which succeed each other, or the parts of which succeed each other, are called *actions*. Therefore actions are the legitimate subject of poetry.
>
> All bodies, however, do not exist simply in space, but also in time. They have a continuance, and each moment of their duration they may appear differently and in different combinations. Each of these momentary appearances and combinations, is the effect of a preceding and may be the cause of a succeeding one, and thus the central point of an action. Painting may therefore imitate actions, but only by suggesting them through bodies.
>
> On the other hand, actions cannot exist of themselves, but are obliged to depend upon certain existences. In so far as these existences are bodies, or must be so considered, poetry may represent bodies, but only by suggesting them through actions.

I must admit that this careful and delicate dissection of the principles of Art and Literature, has a greater charm for the German than for the English mind. But without considering Lessing's critical genius, we can-

not properly appreciate his power and value. He was forced into this field of activity, and his capacities were sharpened by constant exercise, yet it was his true work after all. The critical and the creative faculties never entirely harmonize in the same brain. The critic detects, by observation and analysis, what the creative genius possesses by a special, splendid instinct. It is therefore possible for an author, commencing an important work, to know beforehand *too well* how it should be done. His intellectual insight may be so clear, so sure and so finely exercised, that nothing is left for the imagination. Instead of following his feeling, knowing that many a bright surprise, many an unexpected illumination of thought will come to help him on the way, he is chilled by the critical faculty, which constantly looks over his shoulder and meddles with his freedom. The evidence of this is nowhere more apparent than in Lessing's poems and plays. With all their excellent qualities, they are almost wanting in that warm, imaginative element which welds thought and passion and speech into one inseparable body. It is remarkable that his style, which is so sustained, so dignified and flexible in his critical papers, should seem slightly hard and mechanical in his verse. His most ambitious work, "Nathan the Wise," has passages where the blank verse is strong and rhythmical, but it has also passages the effect of which is not different from that of prose. The one thing, which we can all feel better than de-

scribe, was wanting, to make him a truly great creative author; but had he possessed it, he would probably have done less service to the world. Just the man that he was, was demanded by the age in which he lived.

It appears from his correspondence and the testimony of his friends, that he wrote a drama entitled "*Faust*," the manuscript of which was lost by the publisher to whom it was sent. He never attempted to rewrite it. From the small fragment which remains, and some account of the design of the whole which has been preserved, this work was undoubtedly more poetic and imaginative than any of his other dramatic poems. It coincided with Goethe's great work only in one particular—that the soul of Faust is not lost, and Mephistopheles loses his wager. His mind was not only fruitful, but very rapid in its operation, and only the smallest portion of his literary plans was carried into effect.

One of the severest experiences which Lessing was compelled to undergo had but an indirect connection with literature. He was severely attacked by Pastor Goeze, of Hamburg, for various assertions of opinion, which the latter declared to be unchristian, and the quarrel which followed lasted during the whole of the year 1778. It was carried on by printed pamphlets, of which Lessing wrote fifteen or sixteen. The ground which Lessing assumed would hardly excite any particu-

lar comment in these days. He declared, for instance, that the spirit is more than the letter; that the truth of the Gospels is inherent in them, and not to be demonstrated by external proof; and that the religion of Christ would have been saved to the world, even if the Gospels had not been written. It is difficult for us to comprehend, now, the violence and bitterness with which Lessing was assailed. Efforts were made to deprive him of his situation as librarian; the Government Censor interfered with his replies, and his life, already so lonely and cheerless, was made almost a burden. He never flinched, never uttered a complaint, never, in any way, compromised his dignity or his manly independence; but he seems to have lost something of the hope and confidence of his early days. He must have grown somewhat weary and discouraged. No man stepped forward to stand by his side, and help him fight the battle, and the thousands of eager intelligences, for whom he really spoke and suffered, were silently waiting the result. In fact, the end of the conflict came when Lessing, after having forced Pastor Goeze to admit that the authorities of the Fathers of the Church, during the first four centuries of Christianity, would be sufficient, substantiated everything he had asserted by quoting the opinions of the Fathers. In scholarship, no theologian of his day came near him. His influence, as a religious reformer, has been immense, but is hardly yet recognized by the world. In this

sense, he was no less a martyr than Arnold of Brescia and Savonarola.

When his "Nathan the Wise" was completed, he issued a prospectus, announcing that it would be published by subscription. His object probably was to secure a little more from the publication than he could expect from a bookseller. His father had died in debt, and the calls for assistance from his elder sister were both sharp and frequent. It is rather melancholy to read his appeal to his friends, informing them that the price of the work will be one groschen (two and a half cents) for each printed sheet, and that they may deduct a commission of fifteen per cent. for their services in procuring subscriptions! As the edition did not exceed two thousand copies, the author's profits must have been very moderate. In his correspondence, Lessing speaks of the work having been finished three years previously, and then laid aside. He declares his weariness of the theological controversy, and speaks of the play as "an attack in flank," as its leading idea is religious tolerance. The three principal characters—Nathan, Saladin and the Knight Templar—represent Judaism, Islam and Christianity; and the lesson to be deduced from the plot, is simply that the test of the true religion lies in deeds and works, and not in the mere profession. The finest passage in the work is the story of the rings, which is that of the Jew Melchisedech, as told by Boccaccio, in the third tale of the Decameron. As a

specimen of Lessing's best poetical style, and a parable through which he expressed his own tolerance, I will quote it:

Nath.—Vor grauen Jahren lebt' ein Mann in Osten,
Der einen Ring von unschätzbarem Werth
Aus lieber Hand besass. Der Stein war ein
Opal, der hundert schöne Farben spielte,
Und hatte die geheime Kraft, vor Gott
Und Menschen angenehm zu machen, wer
In dieser Zuversicht ihn trug. Was Wunder
Dass ihn der Mann in Osten darum nie
Vom Finger liess; und die Verfügung traf,
Auf ewig ihn bey seinem Hause zu
Erhalten. Nehmlich so. Er liess den Ring
Von seinen Söhnen dem Geliebtesten;
Und setzte fest, dass diesser wiederum
Den Ring von seinen Söhnen dem vermache,
Der ihm der liebste sey; und stets der Liebste,
Ohn' Ansehn der Geburt, in Kraft allein
Des Rings, das Haupt, der Fürst des Hauses werde.—
Versteh' mich, Sultan. *Sal.*—Ich versteh dich. Weiter!

Nathan.—In gray antiquity there lived a man
In Eastern lands, who had received a ring
Of priceless worth from a beloved hand.
Its stone, an opal, flashed a hundred colors,
And had the secret power of giving favor
In sight of God and man, to him who wore it
With a believing heart. What wonder then
This Eastern man would never put the ring
From off his finger, and should so provide
That to his house it be preserved for ever.
Such was the case. Unto the best-beloved
Among his sons he left the ring, enjoining
That he in turn bequeath it to the son
Who should be dearest; and the dearest ever,
In virtue of the ring, without regard
To birth, be of the house the prince and head.
You understand me, Sultan?

Sal.—Yes; go on!

Nath.—So kam nun dieser Ring,
von Sohn zu Sohn,
Auf einen Vater endlich, von
drey Söhnen;
Die alle drey ihm gleich gehor-
sam waren,
Die alle drey er folglich gleich
zu lieben
Sich nicht entbrechen konnte.
Nur von Zeit
Zu Zeit schien ihm bald der, bald
dieser, bald
Der Dritte, — so wie jeder sich
mit ihm
Allein befand, und sein ergie-
ssend Herz
Die andern zwey nicht theilten,—
würdiger
Des Ringes, den er denn auch
einem jeden
Die fromme Schwachheit hatte,
zu versprechen.
Das ging nun so, so lang es ging.
—Allein
Es kam zum Sterben, und der
gute Vater
Kömmt in Verlegenheit. Es
schmerzt ihn, zwey
Von seinen Söhnen, die sich auf
sein Wort
Verlassen, so zu kränken,—Was
zu thun?—
Er sendet in geheim zu einem
Künstler,
Bey dem er, nach dem Muster
seines Ringes,
Zwey andere bestellt, und weder
Kosten,
Noch Mühe sparen heisst, sie
jenem gleich,

Nathan.—From son to son the
ring descending, came
To one, the sire of three; of
whom all three
Were equally obedient; whom
all three
He therefore must with equal
love regard.
And yet from time to time now
this, now that,
And now the third,—as each
alone was by,
The others not dividing his fond
heart,—
Appeared to him the worthiest
of the ring;
Which then, with loving weak-
ness, he would promise
To each in turn. Thus it con-
tinued long.
But he must die; and then the
loving father
Was sore perplexed. It grieved
him thus to wound
Two faithful sons who trusted
in his word;
But what to do? In secrecy he
calls
An artist to him, and commands
of him
Two other rings, the pattern of
his own;
And bids him neither cost nor
pains to spare

Vollkommen gleich zu machen. Das gelingt
Dem Künstler. Da er ihm die Ringe bringt,
Kann selbst der Vater seinen Musterring
Nicht unterscheiden. Froh und freudig ruft
Er seine Söhne, jeden ins besondre;
Giebt jedem ins besondre seinen Seegen,—
Und seinen Ring,—und stirbt.—Du hörst doch, Sultan?
Sal.—Ich hör', ich höre! Komm mit deinem Mährchen
Nun bald zu Ende. — Wird's?
Nath.—Ich bin zu Ende.
Denn was noch folgt, versteht sich ja von selbst.—
Kaum war der Vater todt, so kömmt ein jeder
Mit seinem Ring.—Und jeder will der Fürst
Des Hauses seyn. Man untersucht, man zankt,
Man klagt. Umsonst, der rechte Ring war nicht
Erweislich;—[*nach einer Pause, in welcher er des Sultans Antwort erwartet*] fast so unerweislich, als
Uns jtzt—der rechte Glaube.
Sal.—Wie? das soll
Die Antwort seyn auf meine Frage? *Nath.*—Soll
Mich blos entschuldigen, wenn ich die Ringe
Mir nicht getrau zu unterscheiden, die

To make them like, precisely like to that.
The artist's skill succeeds. He brings the rings,
And e'en the father cannot tell his own.
Relieved and joyful, summons he his sons,
Each by himself; to each one by himself
He gives his blessing, and his ring—and dies.—
You listen, Sultan?
Sal.—Yes; I hear, I hear.
But bring your story to an end.
Nath.—'Tis ended.
For what remains would tell itself. The father
Was scarcely dead when each brings forth his ring,
And claims the headship. Questioning ensues,
Strife, and appeal to law; but all in vain.
The genuine ring was not to be distinguished;—

[*After a pause, in which he awaits the Sultan's answer.*]

As undistinguishable as with us
The true religion. *Sal.*—That your answer to me?
Nath.—But my apology for not presuming
Between the rings to judge, which with design

Der Vater in der Absicht machen liess,
Damit sie nicht zu unterscheiden wären.
Sal.—Die Ringe!—Spiele nicht mit mir!—Ich dächte,
Dass die Religionen, die ich dir
Genannt, doch wol zu unterscheiden wären,
Bis auf die Kleidung; bis auf Speis und Trank!
Nath.—Und nur von Seiten ihrer Gründe nicht.—
Denn gründen alle sich nicht auf Geschichte?
Geschrieben oder überliefert!—Und
Geschichte muss doch wohl allein auf Treu
Und Glauben angenommen werden?—Nicht?
Nun, wessen Treu und Glauben zieht man denn
Am wenigsten in Zweifel? Doch der Seinen?
Doch deren Blut wir sind? doch deren, die
Von Kindheit an uns Proben ihrer Liebe
Gegeben? die uns nie getäuscht, als wo
Getäuscht zu werden uns heilsamer war?—
Wie kann ich meinen Vätern weniger,
Als du den deinen glauben? Oder umgekehrt.—
Kann ich von dir verlangen, dass du deine

The father ordered undistinguishable.

Sal.—The rings?—You trifle with me. The religions
I named to you are plain to be distinguished—
E'en in the dress, e'en in the food and drink.

Nath.—In all except the grounds on which they rest.
Are they not founded all on history,
Traditional or written? History
Can be accepted only upon trust.
Whom now are we the least inclined to doubt?
Not our own people—our own blood; not those
Who from our childhood up have proved their love;
Ne'er disappointed, save when disappointment
Was wholesome to us? Shall my ancestors
Receive less faith from me, than yours from you?
Reverse it: Can I ask you to belie

Vorfahren Lügen strafst, um meinen nicht
Zu widersprechen? Oder umgekehrt.
Das nehmliche gilt von den Christen. Nicht?—
Sal.—(Bey dem Lebendigen! Der Mann hat Recht.
Ich muss verstummen.) *Nath.*—Lass auf unsre Ring'
Uns wieder kommen. Wie gesagt: die Söhne
Verklagten sich; und jeder schwur dem Richter,
Unmittelbar aus seines Vaters Hand
Den Ring zu haben.—Wie auch wahr!—Nachdem
Er von ihm lange das Versprechen schon
Gehabt, des Ringes Vorrecht einmal zu
Geniessen.—Wie nicht minder wahr!—Der Vater,
Betheur'te jeder, könne gegen ihn
Nicht falsch gewesen seyn; und eh' er dieses
Von ihm, von einem solchen lieben Vater,
Argwohnen lass': eh' müss' er seine Brüder,
So gern er sonst von ihnen nur das Beste
Bereit zu glauben sey, des falschen Spiels
Bezeihen; und er wolle die Verräther
Schon auszufinden wissen; sich schon rächen.

Your fathers, and transfer your faith to mine?
Or yet, again, holds not the same with Christians?

Sal.—(By heaven, the man is right! I've naught to answer.)

Nath.—Return we to our rings. As I have said,
The sons appealed to law, and each took oath
Before the judge that from his father's hand
He had the ring,—as was indeed the truth;
And had received his promise long before,
One day the ring, with all its privileges,
Should be his own,—as was not less the truth.
The father could not have been false to him,
Each one maintained; and rather than allow
Upon the memory of so dear a father
Such stain to rest, he must against his brothers,
Though gladly he would nothing but the best
Believe of them, bring charge of treachery;
Means would he find the traitors to expose,
And be revenged on them.
Sal.—And now the judge?

Sal.—Und nun, der Richter?—
Mich verlangt zu hören,
Was du den Richter sagen lässest. Sprich!
Nath.—Der Richter sprach: wenn ihr mir nun den Vater
Nicht bald zur Stelle schafft, so weis' ich euch
Von meinem Stuhle. Denkt ihr, dass ich Räthsel
Zu lösen da bin? Oder harret ihr,

Bis dass der rechte Ring den Mund eröffne?—
Doch halt! Ich höre ja, dor rechte Ring
Besitzt die Wunderkraft, beliebt zu machen;
Vor Gott und Menschen angenehm. Das muss
Entscheiden! Denn die falschen Ringe werden
Doch das nicht können!—Nun, wen lieben zwey
Von euch am meisten?—Macht, sagt an! Ihr schweigt?
Die Ringe wirken nur zurück? und nicht
Nach aussen? Jeder liebt sich selber nur
Am meisten?—O so seyd ihr alle drey
Betrogene Betrüger! Eure Ringe.
Sind alle drey nicht echt. Der echte Ring
Vermuthlich ging verloren. Den Verlust
Zu bergen, zu ersetzen, liess der Vater
Die drey für einen machen.

I long to hear what words you give the judge.
Go on!

Nath.—Thus spoke the judge: Produce your father
At once before me, else from my tribunal
Do I dismiss you. Think you I am here
To guess your riddles? Either would you wait
Until the genuine ring shall speak?—But hold!
A magic power in the true ring resides,
As I am told, to make its wearer loved,—
Pleasing to God and man. Let that decide.
For in the false can no such virtue lie.
Which one among you, then, do two love best?
Speak! Are you silent? Work the rings but backward,
Not outward? Loves each one himself the best?
Then cheated cheats are all of you! The rings
All three are false. The genuine ring was lost;
And to conceal, supply the loss, the father
Made three in place of one.

Sal.—Herrlich, herrlich!
Nath.—Und also, fuhr der Richter fort, wenn ihr
Nicht meinen Rath, statt meines Spruches wollt:
Geht nur!—Mein Rath ist aber der: ihr nehmt
Die Sache völlig wie sie liegt. Hat von
Euch jeder seinen Ring von seinem Vater
So glaube jeder sicher seinen Ring
Den echten.—Möglich, dass der Vater nun
Die Tyranney des Einen Rings nicht länger
In seinem Hause dulden wollen!
—Und gewiss;
Dass er euch alle drey geliebt, und gleich
Geliebt: indem er zwey nicht drücken mögen,
Um einen zu begünstigen.—
Wohlan!
Es eifre jeder seiner unbestochnen,
Von Vorurtheilen freyen Liebe nach!
Es strebe von euch jeder um die Wette,
Die Kraft des Steins in seinem Ring 'an Tag
Zu legen! komme dieser Kraft mit Sanftmuth,
Mit herzlicher Verträglichkeit, mit Wohlthun,
Mit innigster Ergebenheit in Gott,

Sal.—Oh, excellent!
Nath.—Go, therefore, said the judge, unless my counsel
You'd have in place of sentence. It were this:
Accept the case exactly as it stands.
Had each his ring directly from his father,
Let each believe his own is genuine.
'Tis possible, your father would no longer
His house to one ring's tyranny subject;
And certain that all three of you he loved,
Loved equally, since two he would not humble,
That one might be exalted. Let each one
To his unbought, impartial love aspire;
Each with the others vie to bring to light
The virtue of the stone within his ring;
Let gentleness, a hearty love of peace,
Beneficence, and perfect trust in God,

Zu Hülf'! Und wenn sich dann der Steine Kräfte
Bey euern Kindes-Kindeskindern äussern:
So lad' ich über tausend tausend Jahre,
Sie wiederum vor diesen Stuhl. Da wird
Ein weisrer Mann auf diesem Stuhle sitzen,
Als ich; und sprechen. Geht!— So sagte der
Bescheidne Richter.

Come to his help. Then if the jewel's power
Among your children's children be revealed,
I bid you in a thousand, thousand years,
Again before this bar. A wiser man
Than I shall occupy this seat, and speak.
Go!—Thus the modest judge dismissed them!

Ellen Frothingham.

"Nathan the Wise" was not immediately popular: too many hostile elements were combined against its author. The sectarian spirit of Germany was determined, in advance, not to accept it; and the crowd of pretentious scholars and second-rate authors, who had felt the sting of Lessing's criticism, took every opportunity of revenge. He was accused of glorifying Judaism, in the person of Nathan, at the expense of Christianity, and the slander was everywhere circulated and believed, that the Jews of Amsterdam had sent him a gift of a thousand ducats. He outlived the violence of the assault, but with failing health came a weariness of the struggle; and his last work, "The Education of the Human Race," shows traces of a desire to avoid any further controversy. What general popularity he enjoyed during his life came from his three earlier dramas; but the recognition of the best minds—the only fame which a poet values—was due to his "*Laocoon*." His life

was not without its compensations. The hot water in which he lived was much preferable to the stagnant water in which his literary predecessors had slowly decayed. There was day-break in the sky before he died, and he, who anticipated so many of the currents of thought of the present day, certainly had clearness of vision to see the coming change. He was like the leader of a forlorn hope, who falls at the moment when victory is secured.

The strongest quality of Lessing's mind was his passion for positive truth. The passage in which he sublimely expresses this aspiration has been often quoted, but I must give it again: "Not the truth of which any one is, or supposes himself to be, possessed, but the upright endeavor he has made to arrive at truth, makes the worth of the man. For not by the possession, but by the investigation of truth are his powers expanded, and therein alone consists his ever-growing perfection. If God held all truth shut in his right hand, and in his left hand nothing but the ever-restless instinct for truth, though with the condition of forever and ever erring, and should say to me, 'Choose!' I should humbly bow to his left hand, and say: 'Father, give! Pure truth is for thee alone!'"

The period between 1729 and 1781, which Lessing's life covers, was that of transition—and a transition all the more difficult and convulsive because, for a hundred years previous, the intellectual life of Germany lay in

a trance resembling death. Although the influence of Rousseau and Voltaire, felt in Germany only less powerfully than in France, helped to break up the old order of things, there was not the least connection between their action and that of Lessing. He made Voltaire's acquaintance only to become involved in a personal quarrel with him, and his works show no trace of Rousseau's ideas concerning education and society. He moved forward on a line parallel with other prominent minds in other countries, but always retained a complete independence of them. When he died, the period of struggle was really over, although the fact was not yet manifest. Goethe had published "*Götz von Berlichingen*" and "*Werther*," and Schiller had just written "*Die Raüber*." Herder had given to the world his "Poetry of the People," and was employed upon his "Spirit of Hebrew Poetry;" and Richter, a student of nineteen, had just awakened to a knowledge of his own genius. One by one, the pedants and the mechanical organ-grinders of literature were passing off the stage. French taste died two years later, in the person of its last representative, Frederic the Great, and the close air of Germany was at last vitalized by the fresh oxygen of original thought. Lessing's career, indeed, might be compared to a pure, keen blast of mountain wind, let loose upon a company of enervated persons, dozing in an atmosphere of exhausted ingredients and stale perfumes. It was a breath of life, but it made

them shriek and shudder. When they tried to close the window upon him, he smashed the panes; and then, with the irreverence of all free, natural forces, he began to blow the powder from their wigs and the wigs from their heads. There is something comically pitiful in the impotent wrath with which they attempted to suppress him. We can imagine Gottsched, amazed and incredulous that any one should dare to dispute his pompous authority, and even the good and gentle Gellert, grieving over the pranks of this uncontrollable young poet. We may be sure that none of his faults of character were left undiscovered, and there are few men of equal power whose character shows so fairly after such a scrutiny. He was accused of being a gambler; but the facts of his life are the best answer to the charge. As a poorly-paid writer for the press in Berlin, and a general's secretary in Breslau, he supported himself, contributed toward the education of his brothers, and collected a choice library of six thousand volumes. It is not easy to see what would be left for gambling purposes, after accomplishing all this. His letters to his father exhibit a tender filial respect, a patience under blame and misrepresentation, and a gentle yet firm resistance, based on a manly trust in himself, the like of which I know not where to find. In him, genius and personal character are not to be separated. In one of his conversations with Eckermann, Goethe exclaimed: "We have great need of a

man like Lessing; for wherein is he so great as in his character, in his firm hold of things? There may be as shrewd and intelligent men, but where is such a character?" At another time Goethe said: "Lessing disclaimed any right to the lofty title of a genius; but his permanent influence testifies against himself." Goethe always considered it his special good fortune that Lessing existed as a guide for his youth. He compares the appearance of "*Minna von Barnhelm*" to that of a shining meteor, bursting suddenly on the darkness of the age. "It opened our eyes to the fact," he says, "that there was something higher, something of which that weak literary epoch had no comprehension."

I hope that the distinction which I have already indicated is now tolerably clear—that as a creative intellect, the highest rank cannot be awarded to Lessing; while, as a revolutionary power, as a shaping and organizing force, he has scarcely his equal in history. He was a Reformer, in the truest sense of the word, and bore himself through life with the same independence, the same dignity, the same simple reliance on truth, as Luther at Worms. Notwithstanding the ephemeral nature of many of his controversies, the greater part of them may still be read with profit; for the truth that is in them belongs to no time or country. While some of his contemporaries—Klopstock and Wieland, for example—are gradually losing their prominence in Ger-

man literature, the place which Lessing fills is becoming larger and more important. In one of his early letters to his father, he says: "If I could become the German Molière, I should gain an immortal name." He did more than this: he became the German Lessing!

VIII.

KLOPSTOCK, WIELAND AND HERDER.

I AM obliged, by my limits, to group together in one lecture, the three distinguished contemporaries of Lessing—Klopstock, Wieland and Herder—who also assisted, though by very different methods, in the literary regeneration of Germany. There was no immediate connection between his and their labors, except that all tended in the same direction; and the most I can attempt will be to give a brief outline of their lives, and the special influence which the mind of each exercised upon the period in which they lived. As all three survived the close of the century, they were more fortunate than Lessing, in beholding the transition accomplished—in seeing the age of formality and pedantry buried without funeral honors, and the age of free, vigorous and vital thought triumphantly inaugurated.

Although Klopstock, who was born in 1724, was five years older than Lessing, the two were students together at the University of Leipzig, in 1744, and Lessing's *début* as a dramatic author was coeval with the publication of the first three cantos of Klopstock's "*Messias.*" This is the only coincident circumstance in their lives; in all other

respects there is the greatest unlikeness. Klopstock, a native of Quedlinburg, in Northern Germany, was the son of an official, in easy circumstances. His education, completed at Jena and Leipzig, was thorough; no discouragements met his early aspirations, and his very first literary venture gave him fame and popularity. As a boy, his ambition was to produce a great German epic, and he first selected the Emperor, Henry the Fowler, as his hero. The study of theology in Jena, and probably Milton's example, led him to change the plan, and adopt, instead, the character of Christ. His classic tastes suggested the form: a German counterpart of the "Iliad," he imagined, must also be written in hexameters. The first three cantos of the "*Messias*" were published in 1748, when he was twenty-four years old, and created the profoundest impression all over Germany. They were read with a reverence, a pious fervor, scarcely less than that claimed for the Sacred Writings. Gottsched and his school, it is true, attempted to depreciate the work; but it was not felt by the people to be a violent or dangerous innovation, and its popularity was not affected by the attack. On the other hand, Klopstock was welcomed by the Swiss school, and invited by Bodmer, its head, to visit Zurich. I must here explain that Zurich was then an important literary centre. The English influence was there predominent, as the French was at Leipzig, and the two schools were therefore antagonistic. In intellectual force and temper there was

not much difference between the two, but they achieved some good by partly neutralizing each other's power.

Klopstock went to Zurich in 1750, but did not remain there long. Baron Bernstorff, one of the King of Denmark's ministers, invited him to Copenhagen, offering four hundred thalers a year for his support, in order that he might be free to finish his "Messiah." The proposal was accepted, the salary became a pension for life, and for twenty years Klopstock divided his time between Copenhagen and Hamburg. He had no material cares; his popularity as a poet was so great, that it now seems almost disproportionate to his deserts, and the only shadow upon his fortune was the death of his wife, Meta Moller, whom he lost in 1758, four years after their marriage. In 1771 he left Denmark, and took up his permanent residence in Hamburg, where, about the year 1800, he was visited by Wordsworth and Coleridge. His death took place in 1803, at the age of seventy-nine.

The importance of his life, however, must not be measured by its uneventful character. With the exception of his one great sorrow, his years rolled away tranquilly and happily. He was a frank, honest and loving nature, attracting to himself the best friendship of men, and the enthusiastic admiration of women. The Danish pension, which he received at the beginning of his career, secured him against want, and, with all the breadth and humanity of his views, he was fortunate

enough to escape any serious persecution. Yet, although his life was so serene and successful, the influences which flowed from his works were none the less potent. He was also a reformer, although not militant, like Lessing. We do not see the flash of his sword, and mark the heads that fall at every swing of his arm; but if we look closely, we shall find that the strength of the enemy is slowly sapped, and his power of resistance paralyzed.

In examining Klopstock's place as an author, we must avoid the injustice of applying the standard of a modern and more intelligent taste to his works. The very fact that he attained a swift and widely-extended popularity, proves two things—that there was an amiable, sympathetic quality in his mind, which appealed to the sentiment of his readers, and that he did not rise so far above their intellectual plane that they were unable to follow him. He might, indeed, have diverged more widely from the taste of his time, and still retained his popularity; for he possessed one of the radical qualities of the German nature, which was almost wanting in Lessing—sentiment. He had the power of drawing easy tears, even from those who were unable to appreciate his genius. He was more or less a spoiled child, through his whole life. Portions of his history read very strangely to us now. On leaving the University, he fell in love with a cousin, whom he addressed as "Fanny" in a number of despairing Odes, because

his affection was not returned. He read these Odes in private circles, weeping as he read, and moving his hearers to floods of tears. "Fanny" was soon overwhelmed with letters from all parts of Germany, even from Bodmer in Switzerland, either reproaching her for her cruelty, or imploring her to yield. I am glad to say that she had character enough to refuse, and to marry a man whom she loved. Klopstock, afterward, floating on the Lake of Zurich, with large companies of men and maidens, continued to repeat his melancholy verses, until he and all the others wept, finally kissed all around, and cried out: "This is Elysium!"

What is called the *Sturm und Drang* period of German literature (Carlyle translates the phrase by "Storm and Stress"), was partly a natural and inevitable phase of development; but in so far as it was brought about by the influence of living authors, Klopstock must be looked upon as one of the chief agencies. When we hear of the boy Goethe and his sister Cornelia declaiming passages from the "Messiah," with such energy that the frightened barber dropped his basin, and came near gashing the throat of Goethe the father, we may guess the power of the impression which Klopstock made. It is not sufficient, therefore, that we read the "Messiah" as if it had been written yesterday. We may smile at its over-laden passion and its diffusive sentiment, but when we come to it from the literature

which preceded it, we feel, by contrast, that a pure and refreshing stream of poetry has at last burst forth from the barren soil. The number of those who in Germany, at present, read the whole of the "Messiah," is larger than the number of those who in England now read the whole of Spenser's "Faery Queene;" but it is yet very small. In fact, life is too short for a poem of twenty cantos and twenty thousand lines of hexameter, unless it be a truly great poem. Klopstock began the publication of the "Messiah" in 1748 and finished it in 1773—a period of twenty-five years. It would take more time than I can now spare, to give even an outline of the poem. It commences with the withdrawal of Christ apart from his disciples, to commune with God upon Mount Olivet, includes the Last Supper, the Trial, Crucifixion and Resurrection, and closes in Heaven, when Christ takes his seat, as the Son, on the right hand of the Father. The action, however, is complicated by the introduction of a great number of angels and devils, and the souls of all the chief personages of the Old Testament, beginning with Adam and Eve. Even the daughter of Jairus and the son of the widow of Nain are among the characters.

The opening lines remind us both of Homer and of Milton:

Sing', unsterbliche Seele, der sündigen Menschen Erlösung,	Sing, Immortal Spirit, of sinful man's redemption,
Die der Messias auf Erden in seiner Menschheit vollendet,	Which on earth in his human form fulfilled the Messiah,

Und durch die er Adams Geschlechte die Liebe der Gottheit,
Mit dem Blute des heiligen Bundes von Neuem geschenkt hat.
Also geschah des Ewigen Wille. Vergebens erhub sich
Satan wider den göttlichen Sohn; umsonst stand Juda
Wider ihn auf; er that's und vollbrachte die grosse Versöhnung.

Suffering, slain and transfigured, whence the children of Adam
Once again he hath lifted up to the love of the Godhead.
Thus was done the Eternal Will: and vainly did Satan
Trouble the Son Divine; and Juda vainly opposed him:
As it was willed, he did, and completed the mighty Atonement.

The "Messiah" is only indirectly didactic and doctrinal. On account of the multitude of characters, there is a great deal of action, and the narrative continually breaks into dialogue. It is pervaded throughout by the tender humanity of the Christian religion, and has many passages of genuine sublimity. But it is pitched altogether upon too lofty and ambitious a key, and the mind of the reader, at last, becomes very weary of hanging suspended between heaven and earth. I will translate another passage, to show how Klopstock describes the Indescribable:

Gott sprach so und stand auf vom ewigen Throne. Der Thron klang
Unter ihm hin, da er aufstand. Des Allerheiligsten Berge
Zitterten und mit ihnen der Altar des göttlichen Mittlers.

God so spake, and arose from his Throne Eternal, resounding
Under Him, as He arose: the hills of the Holy of Holies
Trembled, and with them the altar of the Divine Mediator.

Mit des Versöhnenden Altar die Wolken des heiligen Dunkels
Dreimal fliehn sie zurück. Zum viertenmal bebt des Gerichtstuhls
Letzte Höh', es beben an ihm die furchtbaren Stufen

Sichtbar hervor, und der Ewige steigt von dem himmlischen Throne.
So, wenn ein festlicher Tag durch die Himmel alle gefeiert wird,
Und mit allgegenwärtigem Wink der Ewige winket,
Stehen dann auf Einmal, auf allen Sonnen und Erden,
Glänzend von ihren goldenen Stühlen, tausend bei tausend,
Alle Seraphim auf; dann klingen die goldenen Stühle

Und der Harfen Gebet und die niedergeworfenen Kronen.

Also ertönte der himmlische Thron, da Gott von ihm aufstand.

Yea, with the altar the clouds of the holy, mysterious darkness
Thrice they withdrew: the fourth, the Seat of the Judge to its summit
Shook, and the awful steps that lead to the summit were shaken
Visibly: down from his Throne descended then the Eternal.

As, when a festival day is kept through the infinite heavens,
When the beckon of God is omnipresently witnessed,
Then, at once, on all the suns and all of the planets
Shiningly from their golden seats, by thousands of thousands
Rise the Seraphim: then from their golden seats the accordance
Joins the sound of the harps and the clang of the crowns in their falling:—
So, when God stood up, the Heavenly Throne resounded.

If we cannot now find such passages as this almost superhuman in their sublimity, we can, at least, with a little effort of the imagination, understand that a large portion of the German reading public should have so considered them, at the time when they appeared. Klopstock's friends claim that he was the first to intro-

duce the classic hexameter into the language. He was certainly the first who did so successfully; but Lessing shows that both the hexameter and the elegiac measure were used by Fischart, in the seventeenth century. Klopstock's hexameters, moreover, are by no means above criticism; many of his lines try both the ear and the tongue, while now and then we find one which is melody itself. Take, for instance, this line in the original:

Todesworte noch stets und des Weltgerichts Fluch aussprach.

Here the ear bumps along over a corduroy road of hard syllables. Now compare this line:

Deines schwebenden tönenden Ganges melodisches Rauschen.

It has a linked sweetness which would have delighted Milton. Klopstock did not perceive the truth, which Goethe afterward discovered, that the hexameter, to be agreeable, must put off its Greek or Latin habits, and adapt itself to the spirit and manner of the German language; but his labor was both honest and fruitful. The "Messiah" was the result of a deliberate purpose to produce an epic; the subject, we might almost say, was mechanically chosen, and we can only wonder that a work produced under such conditions had so much positive success in its day.

His "Odes," which also attained a great popularity, were formed upon classical models. He endeavored,

in them, to make eloquence and sentiment supply the place of rhyme. To me they seem like a series of gymnastic exercises, whereby the muscles of the language became stronger and its joints more flexible, although the finer essence of poetry disappears in the process. Klopstock hoped, and his admirers believed, that he was creating a classic German literature, by adopting the forms which had become classic in other languages. All we can now admit is that he substituted the influence of Greek literature for that of the French; and this, at the time, was no slight service. His Odes were the earliest inspiration of Schiller, and he had also a crowd of imitators who have left no names behind them.

None of his dramatic poems can be called successful. His "Herman's Fight" was written, like his "Messiah," for a deliberate purpose—to counteract the French influence which was still upheld in Germany, not only by Gottsched and his school, but also by the Court of Frederick the Great. It was dedicated to Joseph II. of Austria, who was looked upon as the representative of the German spirit. But Klopstock, faithful to his idea of transplanting classic forms, revived the old Teutonic gods, and endeavored to construct a new German Olympus. The result is very much like a masquerade. We see the faces and beards of the old Teutonic tribes, their shields and war-clubs, but we hear would-be Grecian voices when they speak. His

attempts in this direction, however, led him to a deeper study of the growth and development of the German language, and determined, for many years, the character of his literary activity. In 1780 he published his "Fragments relating to Language and Poetry," and in 1793 his "Grammatical Conversations"—both sound and valuable works. Yet in them, as in his dramatic poems, the effect was greater than its cause. Probably no author of the last century did so much toward creating a national sentiment, toward checking the impressibility of the race to foreign influences, arousing native pride and stimulating native ambition. This was his greatest service, especially since the German people saw in him the evidence of what he taught. Where Lessing cut his way by destructive criticism, Klopstock worked more slowly by example. In force and scope and originality of intellect there can be no comparison between the two men: Klopstock must always be ranked among minds of the second class: but when we estimate what they achieved during their lives, there is less difference. After Gottsched's death there was no one to assail Klopstock's fame, for all the greater minds that followed him appreciated his work and honored him for it. His prominence as an author did not diminish materially during his life, and the true proportions, into which his fame has since then slowly settled, are still large enough to make him a conspicuous figure in the literary history of the age. Although not more

than ten of his two hundred odes live in the popular memory, his sweet and fervent hymns are sung in all the Protestant churches, and many lines and phrases from his poems have become household words.

In Christopher Martin Wieland, we have a personal history almost as placid as Klopstock's, yet an intellect of very different texture, to consider. Through him we shall first make acquaintance with that company of men who have made the name of Weimar almost as renowned as that of Athens. I shall have more difficulty in indicating the exact place which he occupies in the literary development of Germany, for the reason that his intellectual characteristics are of a lighter and airier quality, and are not so readily transferred to another language.

Wieland was born near Biberach, in Würtemberg, in 1733. Like Lessing, he was the son of a clergyman, and as a boy was noted for his lively, precocious intellect. He had studied Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and attempted poetry, at the age of twelve. Three or four years later he acquired the French and English languages, and then entered the University at Tübingen for the purpose of studying law, to which he devoted no more attention than Lessing did to theology. His nature was flexible and easily impressed, and the appearance of the first three cantos of the "Messiah" impelled him to attempt a similar work. He projected a great German epic, to be called "*Arminius*," very little of

which was written. One of the first works which he published was entitled "Ten Moral Letters." These early essays attracted the notice of Bodmer and the Zurich school, and he was invited thither in 1752, as Klopstock had been two years before. He was then a youth of nineteen, and for several years thenceforth he seems to have been entirely under the influence of Bodmer, Gessner and the other chiefs of the Swiss literary clan.

He was unfortunate in all his ventures during this period. He commenced an epic, of which Cyrus was the hero, but the first five books were received so coldly by the public, that the design was given up. A tragedy called "*Lady Jane Gray*" met with no better fate, unless Lessing's merciless review of it can be considered a distinction. He thereupon attempted a lighter and gayer style, choosing as his subject the episode of "Araspes and Panthea" from Xenophon, but this work also attracted very little attention. He remained in Switzerland until 1760, when he returned to his native place, and accepted a clerkship in the Chancery. The duties of the office were distasteful to so mercurial a nature, and he sought relief from them in undertaking a translation of Shakespeare, which employed him for four or five years. This, I believe, was the first complete publication of Shakespeare in German, and it appeared most opportunely for the development which had then commenced. Although it has since been super-

seded by the more thorough translation of Schlegel and Tieck, it was a careful and conscientious work, for which Wieland deserves the gratitude of his countrymen.

Wieland married in 1765, and four years later accepted the appointment of Professor of Philosophy at the University of Erfurt. After the publication of his Shakespeare, he turned again to authorship, and his persistence at last brought success. With the same susceptibility to external influences, his new attempts were inspired, partly by the French authors of the time, Rousseau among them, and partly by his lyric taste. His "*Agathon*," published in 1767, first made him generally and favorably known. Its leading idea is to show in what degree the external world contributes to human development, and how far wisdom and virtue are sustained by the forces of nature. Three or four works, in which love is the sole theme, followed in quick succession; and, although they were denounced in many quarters, as being free to the verge of immorality, they were none the less read. After his acceptance of the professorship at Erfurt he probably found it expedient to guard himself against a recurrence of the charge, for the character of his works changed, and we find in them an element of satire which up to this time was not exhibited. He next published "*Der goldene Spiegel*" (The Golden Mirror), which was inspired by the liberal policy of Joseph II. Wieland's intellectual

nature, thus far, may best be described by our homely word "flighty." There is little evidence of any serious literary principle, any coherent purpose, in his works, and he seems, in this respect, as un-German as possible. But there is a sportive ease and grace in everything he undertakes, which is new to the language. If Lessing gave it precision and Klopstock freedom, Wieland certainly gave it lightness. The first half of Wieland's life and literary activity was passed, as we have seen, in a restless series of changes; his place of residence, his occupation and the character of his works changing every few years. His wanderings were now to end, and a long season of rest and stability, the effect of which is manifest in his later writings, was granted to his life. In 1772, the Duchess Amalia, of Saxe-Weimar, offered him the post of tutor to the young princes, her sons, with a salary of one thousand thalers a year, which afterward was continued as a pension for life. The eldest of these princes was Karl August, the immortal patron of literature, who was then fifteen years old. The Duchess Amalia had already assembled around her in Weimar a superior literary circle, including Knebel, Musæus and Einsiedel. Three years later, when Karl August assumed the ducal government, Goethe, then in his twenty-sixth year, was called to Weimar. In the meantime, however, Wieland had published a lyrical drama, "*Alcestis*," which was well received by everybody except

Goethe, who satirized it in a dialogue entitled: "Gods, Heroes and Wieland." One of Wieland's admirers retorted by publishing a farce, called "Men, Beasts and Goethe." Wieland seems to have been neither vain nor sensitive to attack. He treated the matter good-humoredly, afterward acknowledged the justice of Goethe's satire, and became at once his personal friend.

Wieland's intellect became broader and clearer through his intercourse with the Weimar circle. His works, thenceforth, exhibit greater finish and consistence; yet he never entirely emancipated himself from the influence of the French school, never adopted the lofty standard of excellence which Schiller and Goethe, and even Herder, set for themselves. The deficiency was inherent in his nature: his temperament was too gay and cheerful, too dependent on moods and sensations, for the earnest work of his fellow authors. He did good service, however, by establishing, soon after his arrival in Weimar, a monthly literary periodical, called "*Der deutsche Mercur*," which he thenceforth edited for more than thirty years, and which was the vehicle through which the most prominent authors became known to a wider circle of readers. In 1780 he published his romantic epic of "*Oberon*," the most permanently popular of all his works. It is an admirable specimen of what Goethe calls the *naïve* in literature—the free, graceful play of the imagination. In-

deed, as a specimen of poetic story-telling, it has not often been excelled in any language. We have, at present, such a story-teller in England—Mr. William Morris—the graces of whose metrical narratives are now delighting us; but their tone, even when he chooses a bright Greek subject, is grave almost to sadness. They are chanted in the minor key, and a sky of gray cloud, or, when brightest, veiled by a hazy mist, hangs over all the landscapes of his verse. Change this tone and atmosphere: let them be clear, fresh and joyous: add sunshine, and pleasant airs, and the multitudinous dance of the waves, and you have the character of Wieland's poetry. His "*Oberon*" is as charming now as when it was first written. It has all the grace and the melody and the easy movement of Ariosto. The severe critic may say that the poem teaches nothing; that many of the incidents are simply grotesque; that the plot is awkwardly constructed; that the hero exhibits no real heroism, and the fairy king and queen are borrowed from Shakespeare: the reader will always answer—"All this may be true, but the poem is delightful." The secret of "*Oberon*" seems to me, that Wieland has combined the joyousness and the freedom of the Greek nature, with the form and the manner of the romantic school in literature. I have re-read it carefully (for the third or fourth time) for the purpose of selecting some passages which might best illustrate its character; but I find it difficult to make any choice, where the key-note of the poem is so

evenly sustained throughout. I will therefore translate a few of the opening stanzas, which will serve my purpose as well as any others. You will notice that while these stanzas are each of eight lines, the length and the metrical character of the lines, and the order of rhyme, are varied according to the author's will:

Noch einmal sattelt mir den Hippogryphen, ihr Musen,
Zum Ritt ins alte romantische Land!
Wie lieblich um meinen entfesselten Busen
Der holde Wahnsinn spielt! Wer schlang das magische Band
Um meine Stirne? Wer treibt von meinen Angen den Nebel,
Der auf der Vorwelt Wundern liegt?
Ich seh', in buntem Gewühl, bald siegend, bald besiegt,
Des Ritters gutes Schwert, der Heiden blinkende Säbel.

Ye Muses, come saddle me the Hyppogryff again,
For a ride in the old, the romantic land!
How sweetly now, around my breast and brain,
The fair illusion plays! Who bound that magic band
About my brow? Who from mine eyelids blew the haze,
Hiding the wonders of old days?
I see, now conquered, now o'ercome, in endless labor,
The faithful sword of the knight, the Paynim's shining sabre!

Vergebens knirscht des alten Sultans Zorn,
Vergebens dräut ein Wald von starren Lanzen;
Es tönt im lieblichen Ton das elfenbeinerne Horn,
Und, wie ein Wirbel, egreift sie alle die Wuth zu tanzen.

In vain the ancient Sultan's wrath and scorn,
Threatens in vain a grove of leveled lances;
The exquisite notes are heard of the ivory horn,
And the crowd is seized and whirled in tumultuous dances!

Sie drehn im Kreise sich um, bis Sinn und Athem entgeht.	They turn and circle till breath and sense are lost.
Triumph, Herr Ritter, Triumph! Gewonnen ist die Schöne.	Triumph, Sir Knight, is thine! Thou hast won the beauty:
Was säumt ihr? Fort! der Wimpel weht:	Why delay? Thy flag in the breeze is tossed;
Nach Rom, dass euern Bund der heil'ge Vater kröne!	Away to Rome, where the Holy Father claims thy duty!

This light and rapid movement characterizes the whole poem, which seems to have been written only in holidays of the mind. The reading of it, therefore, is not a task, but a pure recreation. Wieland, in this respect, was an unconscious and unintentional reformer. Goethe, I have already stated, was led by Lessing to seek for the true principles of literary art; but it is equally certain that he learned of Wieland to relieve and lighten the gravity of his style—to add grace to proportion, and give a playful character to earnest thought.

Wieland must be considered as one of the chief founders of the romantic school. The "Storm and Stress" period, which was simply a fermentation of the conflicting elements—a struggle by means of which the new era of literature grew into existence—commenced about the year 1770, and continued for twenty years. During its existence the Romantic School was developed, separating itself from the classic school, by its freedom of form, its unrestrained sentiment, and its seeking after startling effects. It was a natural retaliation, that France, forty years later, should have bor-

rowed this school from Germany. Wieland was not a partisan in the struggle; neither was he drawn into it, and forced to work his way out again, as were Goethe and Schiller. He belonged to the Romantic school by his nature, and to the classic school by his culture, but the former gave the distinguishing character to his works.

After the completion of "*Oberon*," he undertook the translation of Horace and Lucian, which was followed by the publication of the "*Attische Museum*"—a collection of the principal Greek classics, translated by different hands. Until Schiller started his magazine, called "*Die Horen*" (The Hours), Wieland's "*Deutscher Mercur*" was the first literary periodical in Germany. His later original works are few and unimportant, and had little influence on the thought of the time. He lived to see the battle of Jena, to be presented by Napoleon with the Cross of the Legion of Honor, in 1808, and died, eighty years old, in the year of German Liberation, 1813.

In this brief sketch of Wieland, I have scarcely mentioned more than half of his works, because it is not necessary for the purpose of indicating his place as an author. Perhaps ten per cent. of the thirty-six volumes which he left behind him, are now read. The winnowing-mill of Time makes sad havoc with works considered immortal in their day. A great deal of Wieland's productiveness has been blown away as chaff,

but enough sound grain remains to account for his influence, and to justify our honorable recognition of his genius. If he did not follow truth with the unselfish devotion of Lessing—if he was not animated by a lofty patriotic purpose, like Klopstock—we nevertheless do not feel inclined to judge him too rigidly. His grace, his humor, his delicate irony and refined though rather shallow appreciation of the element of beauty, disarm us in advance. We cannot escape a hearty friendly feeling for the man who was always so cheerful and amiable, and whose works, light as they may seem in comparison, form a counterpoise for so many of the "heavy weights" in German Literature. Falk relates that on the day after Wieland's burial, Goethe spoke of him in these terms: "He possessed an incomparable nature: in him all was fluency, spirit and taste! It is a cheerful plain, where there is nothing to stumble over, threaded by the stream of a comical wit, which winds capriciously in all directions, and sometimes even turns against its author. There is not the slightest trace in him of that deliberate, laborious technical quality, which sometimes spoils for us the best ideas and feelings, by making their expression seem artificial. This natural ease and freedom is the reason why I always prefer to read Shakespeare in Wieland's translation. He handled rhyme as a master. I believe, if one had poured upon his desk a composing-case full of words, he would have arranged them, in a little while,

into a charming poem." Although this is the tribute of a friend who had been for forty years intimate with Wieland, and was given during the tender sorrow which his loss called forth, it is not exaggerated praise.

Just such an intellectual temperament as Wieland possessed was needed in his time. The language as well as the literature was in the process of development: there were enough of thoughtful and earnest minds engaged in the work, and they would have fallen too exclusively into the serious, brooding habit of the race, had they not been interrupted by Wieland's playful fancy and his delicate satire. Our English language found all these qualities combined in the one man, Shakespeare, but other countries have not been so fortunate. It required three men—Lessing, Wieland and Goethe—to perform a similar service for the German language. In this respect, the sportive element in Wieland's mind was as valuable as genius. It is certainly rarer. Much of our modern literature lacks the same quality. It betrays the grave labored purpose of the author, as if expression were a stern duty, instead of seeming, as it should seem, free, inevitable and joyous. Goethe says that Wieland was the only member of the Weimar circle who could publish his works in the monthly "Mercury" by instalments, as they were written, without being at all affected by the misconception of the public or the hostile criticism of his rivals. It is pleasant to contemplate the activity of so

serene and cheerful a mind. He never had a following of enthusiastic admirers, like Klopstock or Schiller, but the public regarded him always with a kindly good-will. It was for a time fashionable, in Germany, to depreciate his literary achievements. He has been accused of being governed by French influences, because of his light and volatile nature; but the influence, so far as it existed, soon wore off, and left only the natural resemblance, which was no fault. On the contrary, it was his good fortune and that of his contemporaries.

I do not mention Herder last because I consider him the least important of the three, but simply because he came last in the order of birth. Although a good part of the fight had been fought, by the time he was old enough to engage in it, he belongs also to the pioneers and builders. It is remarkable that, in this review of the great German authors of the last century, each retains, from first to last, his own clearly-marked individuality. Each preserves his own independent activity, while following a similar aim, even after years of the closest personal intercourse. There was a wide field and much work before them, and Nature seems so to have ordered their minds, that each found his fitting department of labor, and all, together, carried forward a broad front of development.

Johann Gottfried Herder was born in 1744, in a village in Eastern Prussia, where his father was teacher and

Cantor in the church. Allowed to read nothing but the Bible and the hymn-book at home, his craving for knowledge attracted the attention of a neighboring clergyman, who gave him instruction in Latin and Greek. At the age of eighteen, a Russian physician, who took a great interest in the eager, intelligent, friendless boy, proposed to have him educated as a surgeon, in Königsberg and St. Petersburg. He fainted on beholding the first dissection, and the plan was given up; but he remained in Königsberg, subsisting literally on charity, and studying at the University. The philosopher Kant allowed him to attend his lectures without paying the usual fee. The study of theology specially attracted him, but no branch of knowledge was neglected. After struggling along, under the most discouraging circumstances, for two years, he accepted a situation as teacher in Riga, and began to preach as soon as he had been properly ordained to the office. His popularity became so great, both as a teacher and as an eloquent, earnest preacher, that in the course of four or five years his friends in Riga determined to build a large church, and have him installed as pastor. At the same time he was invited to become the Director of the German school in St. Petersburg. He declined both these offers, and left Riga in 1769, intending to make a journey through Europe. At Strassburg, an affection of the eyes obliged him to give up the plan, and to remain in that city for surgical treatment. Here he became acquainted with a youth of

twenty, named Goethe, and for some months the two were inseparable companions. Herder, then twenty-five years old, had already published two works—"Fragments concerning Recent German Literature," and "Forests of Criticism," wherein he had planted himself on the side of Winckelmann and Lessing, taking a strong position of antagonism to the pedantry and superficial taste which those authors assailed. Goethe, who, during his residence in Strassburg, wrote his play of "*Die Mitschuldigen*" (The Accomplices) and was brooding over the plan of "*Götz von Berlichingen*," profited greatly by his intercourse with Herder, and his friendship became one of the influences which determined Herder's later life.

While at Strassburg, Herder received an invitation to become Court-Preacher at Bückeburg, a town in Northern Germany, the capital of the little principality of Schaumburg-Lippe. He accepted the call, and remained at Bückeburg, in that capacity, for five years, during which time his reputation as a theologian became so generally established, that he was offered the Professorship of Theology at Göttingen. He hesitated to accept the position, because, by order of the King of Hanover, it was burdened with certain conditions which were not agreeable. After the negotiations had continued for some months, a day was fixed for Herder's decision, and on that very day he received an offer of the place of Court-Preacher and member of the Clerical Consistory

at Weimar. He delayed no longer, but followed the instinct which led so many tempest-tost brains into that quiet and secure harbor of the German Muses. By the end of the year 1776, Wieland, Herder and Goethe were citizens of Weimar. Here the incidents of Herder's life, like those of Wieland's, cease to interest us, and we are occupied only with his literary development.

In 1778 he published his "*Volkslieder*": the English title, which would best express the character of the work, is "Poetry of the Races." It is a careful selection from the popular songs and ballads of nearly all the languages of Europe, including the Lithuanian, Livonian, Servian, Danish, English and Modern Greek. He makes good use of Percy's "Reliques" and the lyrics of the Elizabethan dramatists, and even translates passages of Ossian into rhyme. These translations, although not always very literal, are thoroughly poetic, and may be read with satisfaction. His object seems to have been, to direct the attention of the German public to the natural poetic elements which exist in the early civilization of all races, and thereby to counteract the tendency toward schools or fashions in poetry. He sought to impress the catholicity of his own taste upon the popular mind, and was certainly successful in diverting much of the thought of his day out of the narrow channels in which it had been accustomed to move. In 1782 he published his "Spirit of Hebrew Poetry," a work which has been translated and extensively read in English.

It is an exposition of his views in regard to the primitive poetry of the race, in its connection with religion. Its indirect tendency, as well as that of his strictly theological writings, was to inculcate a broader, a more intelligent—one might almost say, a more human—religious sentiment. He took the same ground as Lessing, concerning the superiority of the spirit to the letter, but, as a clergyman, he was spared the bitter hostility which the layman had provoked. Perhaps, also, the warmth, the eloquence and the enthusiasm which pervaded all his writings gave his ideas an easier acceptance than they would have found, if presented with the intellectual bareness and keenness of Lessing's style.

Passing over Herder's essays and critical papers, I will only mention two other of his more important works —the metrical romance of "*Der Cid*," the materials of which he collected from the old Spanish legends and ballads, and his "Ideas toward a Philosophy of Human History," which is generally considered to be his greatest work. "The Cid" is written in unrhymed Trochaics—a measure which was first employed in English by Longfellow in his "Hiawatha." Although it is considered a classic poem in German, and is still printed in luxurious editions, it is only enjoyed by the more cultivated class of readers. It has something of the mechanical character of many of his Odes. He was less a poet, in fact, than a man of sensitive poetic taste. He had a large, warm, receptive nature, and his inspiration came from

the feelings rather than from the imagination. His "Ideas of the Philosophy of History" are the fragments of a larger design. They anticipate many views which have only been taken up and practically developed in the literature of our day. He considers man as an entity, whose different modes of development in the earlier races must be referred to the operation of the same universal laws. He traces the upward tendency, the preparation for a higher spiritual life, through all the varied forms of civilization, and infers the existence of a sublime progressive destiny, of which all our past history is a part.

During the later years of his life, Herder became sensitive and irritable, although he still retained his wonderful magnetic power over other men. His performance of his official duties was beneficently felt throughout the Duchy. His authority in the Church, his supervision of the schools, his control of the government-charities, were all characterized by a wise, liberal and thoroughly humane spirit. In 1801 he was appointed President of the Consistory, the highest office belonging to his profession, and was ennobled by the Elector of Bavaria. He lived but two years longer to enjoy these honors, dying in 1803, in his sixtieth year. The Duke, Karl August, ordered the words to be engraved upon his tomb—"Light, Love, Life."

The great influence which Herder exercised during his life cannot be doubted; yet, in looking over his

works at the present day, it is easy to miss the secret of that influence. I confess that, notwithstanding the evidence of an earnest, brooding mind, which I find everywhere—notwithstanding the variety and beauty of the scattered thoughts—Herder's works impress me like a collection of great, irregular fragments. He has less of positive style than any of his contemporaries. His views seem to lack an ordered connection, and this gives an air of uncertainty to the operations of his mind. Everything he does resembles a figure which the sculptor has not wholly hewn from the marble. Here and there an outline may be clearly cut, the form and expression may be everywhere indicated, but we are nevertheless tantalized by the unchiseled stone hiding as much as it reveals. His design is evidently greater than his power of execution—like the face of the Dawn, which baffled Michael Angelo.

But this very circumstance, if I rightly interpret it, gives a hint of his true power—and it is an agency which we have not yet considered. I mean the power of *suggestiveness.* There is something stimulating and provocative in ideas which fall short of their full and clear expression. The breadth of Herder's views, aided as they were by his remarkable eloquence, made them attractive at a time when the mind of Germany was throbbing with its highest vitality, and they must have opened innumerable side-paths to others. The place which he attempted to fill was so large, that there was

necessarily more variety than thoroughness in his work. But all that he did helped to widen the intellectual horizon: his spirit was never otherwise than liberal, tolerant and pervaded with the noblest sympathies. Neither his philological learning, nor his philosophy, would now be considered remarkable, but, as one of his critics truly says, they were exactly adequate to his needs and the needs of his time.

I think, therefore, that we shall be correct in designating Herder as a *procreative*, rather than a *creative* power in German literature—that is, that his suggestive, awakening and stimulating influence on other minds was his chief merit. The value of his writings is thus not affected by their want of artistic completeness,—nor is it merely a temporary value. His ideas still retain their fructifying character, because the aspiration which underlies them is always lofty and sincere.

Goethe, speaking to Eckermann, in the year 1824, thus expressed himself concerning Klopstock and Herder: "Had it not been for these powerful forerunners, our literature could not have become what it now is. When they came, they were far in advance of their time, and they equally drew it after them; but now the age has distanced them, and notwithstanding they were once so necessary and important, they have ceased to be vital forces. A young man who should now-a-days draw his culture from Klopstock and Herder, would fall to the rear."

Goethe ascribed the unusual culture of the middle classes, which had been developed througout Germany during the previous fifty years, more to Wieland and Herder, than to Lessing. "Lessing," he said, "was the highest intelligence, and only an equal intelligence could thoroughly be taught by him. He was dangerous to half-capacities. To Wieland," he added, "all the higher cultivation of Germany owes its style. This class learned a great deal from him, not the least of which was the faculty of appropriate expression."

In these remarks, Goethe refers principally to Lessing's critical works, and he also ignores both his own and Schiller's influence on the national culture. Nevertheless, the distinction which he draws is at bottom correct. Taking Lessing, Klopstock, Wieland and Herder, as the representative forerunners and reformers, who first created the splendid age of literature which they then adorned, we may thus apportion their separate shares in the work. Lessing, unquestionably first, both in intellect and character, was a strong independent power, operating chiefly on the best thinkers and writers of his day. Klopstock, by his use of the religious element, won the people to his side, employed his influence to implant among them a lofty national sentiment, and gave eloquence, form and expression to the language. Wieland, the literary Epicurean, giving himself up to the shifting play of his moods and sensations, imparted lightness, grace and elegance to the

language, adding sparkle to strength and melody to correctness of form. Herder, finally, broke down the narrower limits of thought, led the aspirations of men back to their primitive sources, placed before them the universal and permanent in literature, rather than the national and temporary, and deepened and widened in every way the general culture, through the fruitful suggestiveness of his ideas. The more we contemplate the lives and the labors of these four authors, the more clearly we feel the necessity of each. The development of the German language had been long delayed, but these men, working simultaneously, raised it rapidly to an equal power and dignity among the other modern tongues of Europe.

We now turn from the period of struggle to that of creative repose. The battle has been fought: the ground has been won: we shall henceforth breathe a serener air, and feel the presence of a purer and grander inspiration.

IX.

SCHILLER.

TAKING the German authors in the order of their progressive development, we are next led to Schiller, who, although he was born ten years later than Goethe, died twenty-seven years earlier. His life is thus included within that of Goethe, but only as the orbit of Venus is included within that of the Earth: the courses may be nearly parallel, but are never identical.

In Schiller's case, I have the advantage of dealing with material, much of which is tolerably familiar to English readers. The biography and essays of Carlyle, and the translations of Coleridge, Bulwer, Bowring and others, have gradually created an impression, in England and America, of Schiller's character and genius —an impression which is just in outline, if somewhat vague in certain respects. The more delicate lights and shades, which are necessary to complete the picture, can be given only by the intimate and sympathetic study which the poet inspires in those who have made his acquaintance. Like Burns and Byron, he creates a personal interest in the reader, in the light of which his works are almost inevitably viewed. An indefinable

magnetism clings to his name, and accompanies it all over the world. In vain Richter speaks of "the stony Schiller, from whom strangers spring back, as from a precipice"—in vain Mr. Crabb Robinson describes him as unsocial, and with a wild expression of face—few poets have ever excited more enthusiasm, sympathy, and love in the human race, than Friedrich Schiller. Even when we know his life, and have analyzed his works, the problem is not entirely solved. Mankind seems sometimes to give way, like an individual, to an impulse of unreasoning affection, and the fortunate poet upon whom it falls is sure of a beautiful immortality.

Schiller was born on the 10th of November, 1759, in the little town of Marbach, in Würtemberg. His father was a military surgeon, who had distinguished himself in campaigns in the Netherlands and Bohemia, where he also served as an officer, and attained the rank of Captain. He was an instance, very rare in those days, of a man who tried, in middle age, to make up for the deficiencies of his early education, and whatever capacity Schiller may have received by inheritance came from him, and not from the mother. Noted, as a child, for his spiritual and imaginative nature, Schiller's early ambition was to become a clergyman; but the Duke Karl of Würtemberg insisted, against the wish of the boy's parents, on having him educated in a new school which he had just founded in Stuttgart.

At the age of fourteen Schiller entered this school,

which was conducted according to the strictest military ideas. The pupils were considered as so many machines, to be mechanically developed: not the slightest regard was paid to natural differences of capacity: their studies, their performances, and even their recreation, were regulated by an inflexible system. Unable to escape his fate, Schiller at first selected jurisprudence, but soon changed it for medicine, in which branch he was graduated, in his twenty-first year. There is no doubt that the severe and soulless discipline to which he was subjected for seven years was one cause of the fierce, reckless, rebellious spirit which pervades his earliest works. The religious aspiration having been checked, all the strength and passion of his nature turned to poetry. "The Messiah" and the Odes of Klopstock, and Goethe's drama of "*Götz von Berlichingen*," made the most powerful impression upon his mind, and the circumstance that all such reading was prohibited, only spurred him the more to enjoy it by stealth. Among the authors with whom he became acquainted was Shakespeare, whose power he felt without clearly comprehending it. His own ambition was stimulated by his intense enjoyment of poetry, and he attempted both an epic and a tragedy before his eighteenth year. These boyish works he threw into the fire, and then commenced his play of "*Die Räuber*" (The Robbers), which was completed about the time of his graduation as a military surgeon. After being appointed to a regiment in Stuttgart, and feeling

that the subordinate period of his life was ended, he published "The Robbers" in 1781, at his own expense, no publisher daring to run the risk. The impression which it produced was as immediate and powerful as that of Byron's "Childe Harold"—he woke up one morning and found himself famous. Its wild and passionate arraignment of Society, its daring blending of magnanimity, courage and crime in the same character, and the stormy, impetuous action which sweeps through it from beginning to end, startled not only Germany but all Europe. The popular doctrines which preceded the French Revolution, now only nine years off, prepared the way for it: the "Storm and Stress" period of German literature, exultant over the overthrow of the old dynasties in letters, hailed it with cries of welcome, and in the chaotic excitement and ferment of the time its flagrant violations of truth and taste were overlooked. Only its defiant power and freedom were felt and celebrated. Even in reading "The Robbers" now, we are forced to acknowledge these qualities, although we are both amused and shocked at its extravagance. Much of the play cannot be better characterized than by our slang American word—"highfalutin." No one saw this more clearly, or condemned it more emphatically than Schiller himself, in later years. "My great mistake," he once said, "was in attempting to represent men two years before I really knew a single man."

The hostility which "The Robbers" provoked was

fully as intense as the praise. The Conservative sentiment of Germany rose in arms against it. The Duke sent for Schiller and endeavored to exact a pledge from him that he would publish nothing further without first submitting it to him, the Duke. To a man of Schiller's temperament, this was impossible. Moreover, he had seen the unfortunate poet Schubart, in the fortress of Hohenasperg, where he was confined ten years for having offended his Ruler by the liberal tone of his poetry, and could easily guess how much freedom the Duke's censorship would allow him. At the same time Baron Dalberg, Director of the theatre at Mannheim, requested him to adapt "The Robbers" for representation on the stage. When the first performance was to take place, Schiller, unable to obtain leave of absence, went to Mannheim without it, and on his return was arrested and imprisoned. His insubordination gave great offence to the Duke, and it seems probable that severer measures were threatened. But one alternative was left to Schiller, and he adopted it. In 1782, he left Stuttgart in disguise, and under an assumed name, went first to Mannheim, and then to the estate of a friend near Meiningen, where he remained in complete seclusion for almost a year. During this time he completed his plays of "*Fiesco*" and "*Kabale und Liebe*" (Intrigue and Love), which were both successful on the stage. It is easy to detect their faults of construction and their overcharged sentiment, but in both the vital warmth and

the fire of the author's nature make themselves felt. The general public, who are never critical, found a new sense of enjoyment in Schiller's plays, and accepted him in spite of the critics. Towards the close of 1783, he was summoned to Mannheim, where Baron Dalberg offered him the post of Dramatic Poet, connected with the theatrical management. He remained there eighteen months, and during this time started the "Rhenish Thalia"—a literary periodical which treated especially of the drama. Various causes, which need not now be explained, combined to make his position disagreeable, and in March, 1785, he took up his residence in Leipzig. The principal cause of this change was a circumstance which many persons would brand as "sentimental," but which seems to me, in the noblest sense, human. Some months previous, he had received a letter from Leipzig, signed by four unknown persons, and accompanied by their miniature portraits. These persons were Huber and Körner, both of whom became afterwards distinguished in letters, and Minna and Doris Stock, their betrothed brides. The letter which they wrote exhibited so much refined and genial appreciation of Schiller's genius—so much affectionate interest in his fortunes—that, to Schiller's eager and impulsive nature, it offered him an escape from the annoyances which attended his position at Mannheim. Körner and Huber received him like brothers. All they had—money, time, counsel, help,—he was free to

claim: the "sentiments" of their letter to the unknown poet were justified by the practical results.

Schiller's critics and biographers seem to have united in dividing his literary life into three distinct periods, the first of which closes with his emigration from Mannheim to Leipzig. We might call this the period of Assertion, and designate the others which followed as the periods of Development and Achievement. Up to this time, in fact, we find the evidence of powers, neither harmonious nor intelligent as yet, forcing their way to the light: we find the spirit of other poets stimulating him to warmer and more passionate expression than they would have dared: all is vivid, luxuriant, teeming with life, and permeated with the kindred forces of hope and desire. It was this intense vitality, this outpouring of a nature which pressed upward and onward with all its energies, which accounts for Schiller's immediate popularity. Something similar in English literature was the reception given to Bailey's "Festus" and Alexander Smith's "Life Drama"—but they were really the end of their achievement, whereas this was the beginning of Schiller's. His early plays and poems reflect the roused and restless spirit of the times,—the universal yearning for light and liberty. The beginning of his literary activity corresponds exactly with the date of Lessing's death. The field was therefore cleared for him, and we should not marvel if something of the wildness and crudity of a first settler stamps his performance.

In the lyrics belonging to the First Period, the glow and warmth which, in his later poems, fuse the subject and sentiment together, are already apparent, although the fusion is less perfect. They are mostly irregular in form and incomplete in thought. The poems addressed to "Laura" correspond to Tennyson's youthful lyrics to "Eleanore," "Adeline" and other girlish names, with the difference that the sentiment is German and not English. As an example I will quote two brief lyrics, "*Tartarus*" and "*Elysium*" (of the latter only the first half):

GRUPPE AUS DEM TARTARUS.

Horch—wie Murmeln des empörten Meeres,
Wie durch hohler Felsen Becken weint ein Bach,
Stöhnt dort dumpfigtief ein schweres, leeres,
Qualerpresstes Ach!

Schmerz verzerret
Ihr Gesicht; Verzweiflung sperret
Thren Rachen fluchend auf.

Hohl sind ihre Augen, ihre Blicke
Spähen bang nach des Cocytus Brücke,
Folgen thränend seinem Trauerlauf,

Fragen sich einander ängstlich leise,
Ob noch nicht Vollendung sei?

A GROUP IN TARTARUS.

Hark! as noises of the hoarse, aroused sea,
As through hollow-throated rocks a streamlet's moan,
Sounds below there, wearily and endlessly,
A torture-burdened groan!

Faces wearing
Pain alone, in wild despairing,
Curse through jaws that open wide;
And with haggard eyes forever
Gaze upon the bridge of Hell's black river,
Weeping, gaze upon its sullen tide.

Ask each other, then, in fearful whispers,
If not soon the end shall be?

Ewigkeit schwingt über ihnen Kreise,
Bricht die Sense des Saturns entzwei.

The End?—the scythe of Time is broken;
Over them revolves Eternity!

Now let us turn to the brightness and music of his picture of

ELYSIUM.

Vorüber die stöhnende Klage!
Elysiums Freudengelage
Ersäufen jegliches Ach—

Elysiums Leben
Ewige Wonne, ewiges Schweben,
Durch lachende Fluren ein flötender Bach.

Jugendlich milde
Beschwebt die Gefilde
Ewiger Mai;
Die Stunden entfliehen in goldenen Träumen,
Die Seele schwillt aus in unendlichen Räumen,
Wahrheit reisst hier den Schleier entzwei.

Unendliche Freude
Durchwallet das Herz.

Hier mangelt der Name dem trauernden Leide;
Sanfter Entzücken nur heisset hier Schmerz.

ELYSIUM.

Gone is the wail and the torture!
Elysium's banquets of rapture
Chase every shadow of woe!

Elysium, seeing,
Endless the bliss and endless the being,
As musical brooks through the meadows that flow!

May is eternal,
Over the vernal
Landscapes of youth:
The Hours bring golden dreams in their races,
The soul is expanded through infinite spaces,
The veil is torn from the visage of Truth!

Here never a morrow
The heart's full rapture can blight;
Even a name is wanting to Sorrow,
And Pain is only a gentler delight.

A comparison of these early poems of Schiller with those of Klopstock, at his best period, will show how much the language has already gained in fire and freedom of movement. A new soul has entered into and taken possession of it, and we shall find that the promise of loftier development was not left unfulfilled.

Körner married soon after Schiller's arrival in Leipzig, and then settled in Dresden, whither Schiller followed him. For nearly two years Körner's house was his home. The play of "*Don Carlos*," which he had begun to write in Mannheim, was there re-written and completed. It was a great advance upon his former works, although far below what he afterwards achieved. Few dramatic poems are more attractive to young men, and, as Goethe says, it will always be read, because there will always be young men. In the character of Don Carlos we detect a great deal of Schiller's own aspiration and impatience of obstacles, while the Marquis Posa is at the same time a noble ideal and an impossible man. The great attraction of the play is its sustained and impassioned eloquence.

Before its publication, Schiller's circumstances obliged him to cast about for some literary labor which might support him. He finally decided to write an historical work, selecting the Revolt of the Netherlands for his theme. His preliminary studies were not very thorough, nor was the history ever completed, but its lively and picturesque narrative style gave it a temporary success.

He formed various other plans of labor, few of which were carried out—probably because he found it difficult to endure much drudgery of the kind; and for several years his life was burdened with pecuniary embarrassments. In 1787 he went to Weimar for the first time, and made the acquaintance of Wieland and Herder. Goethe was then absent in Italy. The most important result of this visit, however, was his meeting in Rudolstadt with his future wife, Charlotte von Lengefeld. It was the cause of his returning to Rudolstadt the following summer, and there, in the garden of the Lengefeld family, he first met Goethe. The interview has a special interest, from the fact that these two poets, destined to be friends and co-laborers, mutually repelled each other. Schiller wrote of Goethe to Körner: "His whole being is, from its origin, constructed differently from mine; his world is not my world; our modes of conceiving things are essentially different, and with such a combination there can be no substantial intimacy between us." Nevertheless, it was through Goethe's influence that Schiller, early in 1789, was offered the place of Professor of History at the University of Jena. Schiller at first hesitated about accepting the offer, on account of his want both of preparation and of natural fitness, but he was tired of his homeless life, he craved some fixed means of support, and he saw in the appointment the first step towards marriage. In 1858, when the three-hundredth

anniversary of the University of Jena was celebrated, I met there with a graduate, ninety years old, who had heard Schiller's first historical lecture, in 1789. The account he gave of the rush of the younger students to hear him, and the immediate popularity of the new professor, explained the modest hints of his success which we find in Schiller's letters to Körner. He was so new to the subject that he was frequently obliged to learn one day what he taught the next, but this very circumstance added to the spirit and freshness of his lectures. His productive activity re-commenced with this change in his fortunes. In February, 1790, he married, and the unrest of his life ceased; but for several years thereafter he undertook no important work except the "History of the Thirty Years' War," which was completed in 1793. Carlyle speaks of this work as the best piece of historical writing which, up to that time, had appeared in Germany.

The causes of this apparent inactivity—that is, inactivity, only as contrasted with his usual productive industry—were two-fold. In the year 1791 he was attacked with an inflammation of the lungs which brought him to the verge of the grave, and left lasting consequences behind it. Meyer, the artist, who first met Schiller in that year, states that his appearance was that of a man stricken with death. Goethe was with Meyer, and said, after Schiller had passed: "there are not more than fourteen days of life in him." But

there proved to be fourteen years, and fourteen years of such earnest, absorbing, unremitting labor, such great and progressive achievement, as can be found in the life of no other poet who ever lived. Although Schiller did not attain the highest, he pressed towards the highest with an energy so intense that it seems almost tragic. His illness was a cloud which was speedily silvered with the light of the noblest sympathy. The news of his death had gone forth, and a company of his unknown friends in Copenhagen instituted a solemn service in honor of his name. Among them were the Prince of Augustenburg, Count Schimmelmann, and the Danish poet Baggesen. They met on the shore of the Baltic, pronounced an oration and chanted a dirge, when the news of Schiller's recovery reached them while they were still assembled. A joyous song succeeded the mourning services, and the two noblemen pledged themselves to offer the poet one thousand thalers annually for three years, that he might rest and recover his strength. Thus, as his early exile brought him Körner's friendship and help, the illness, which disabled him for a time, gave him a new experience of human generosity. No man can attract such sympathy unless he possesses qualities of character which justify it. We are reminded of Lowell's lines:

> "Be noble, and the nobleness that lies
> In other men, sleeping but never dead,
> Will rise in majesty to meet thine own."

However, it was not alone this illness which interfered with Schiller's literary activity. I have called his Second Period that of Development, but it was not, therefore, a period of sound and harmonious growth. Before accepting the Professorship at Jena, his wandering, irregular life had given him little opportunity for quiet study; the strongly subjective habit of mind, which caused him to throw something of his own nature into all the characters of his dramas, had also interfered with his true education, and the necessity which forced him to take up collateral studies was a piece of good fortune in the end, although he could not feel it so at the time. He was nearly thirty years old before he could appreciate the objective character of Shakespeare's genius. When, at last, his eyes were opened, he looked upon himself and recognized his own deficiencies. After Shakespeare he studied Homer and the Greek dramatists, and was then led, through his association with the learned society of Jena, into the misty fields of philosophical speculation. The latter, no doubt, misled him as positively as the study of the great poets had guided him towards the right path. He became a zealous disciple of Kant, and the few poems which he wrote during this period show to what an extent his mind was given to theorizing. His poem of "*Die Künstler*" (The Artists), which he considered at the time his best production, is chiefly valuable to us now as an example of poetry crushed by philosophy. His

"Æsthetic Letters" and his "Essay on Naïve and Sentimental Poetry," written during those years, contain many admirable passages, but we cannot help feeling that they interfered with his creative power. It was a period of transition which unsettled the operations of his mind, and sometimes prevented him from seeing clearly. "The Artist," he wrote, in a passage which has been much admired, "the Artist, it is true, is the son of his time; but woe to him if he is its pupil, or even its favorite! Let some beneficent divinity snatch him, when a suckling, from the breast of his mother, and nurse him with the milk of a better time; that he may ripen to his full stature beneath a distant Grecian sky. And having grown to manhood, let him return, a foreign shape, into his century; not, however, to delight it by his presence, but dreadful, like the son of Agamemnon, to purify it!" In this passage Schiller expresses his own temporary ambition, but not his true place in literature. The ideal he represents is noble, but it is partly false. The Artist cannot grow to his full stature under a Grecian sky: he must not be "a foreign shape" in his century: he must place his "better time" not in the Past, but in the Future, and make himself its forerunner. Schiller seems to have had an instinct of his unsettled state. Although he conceived the plan of "*Wallenstein*" while writing his "History of the Thirty Years' War," he hesitated for a long time before beginning to write, and, in his letters to Körner, expresses doubts of his final success.

The one poem which permanently marks this phase of Schiller's life, is "*Die Götter Griechenlands*" (The Gods of Greece)—one of the finest lyrics in the language. The fact that we can detect the secret of its inspiration does not diminish the charm which seduces us to read and re-read it, until its impassioned, resonant stanzas are fixed in the memory. Although it is merely a lament for the lost age of gods and god-like men—a disparagement of the Present, exalting a Past so distant that it becomes ideal—the poem appeals to a universal sentiment, and expresses a feeling common to all educated men, at one period of their lives. Most poets have dropped "melodious tears" upon the crowning civilization of Greece, but none with such mingled fire and sweetness as Schiller. At the time when this poem appeared, the Counts Stolberg, who represented a rigidly sectarian clique in German literature, had assumed a position of hostility to the Weimar authors, and they bitterly assailed the "Gods of Greece" on the plea that it was an attack upon Christianity! This is the usual subterfuge of narrow natures: it is so much easier to awaken religious prejudices against an author, than to meet him with fair and intelligent criticism. The Stolbergs made a little noise for a time, but their malignity was as futile as that of the publisher, Nicolai, in Berlin, who coolly declared that he would soon suppress Goethe!

I quote a few stanzas of the "Gods of Greece:"

Da ihr noch die schöne Welt regieret,
An der Freude leichtem Gängelband
Selige Geschlechter noch geführet,
Schöne Wesen aus dem Fabelland!
Ach, da euer Wonnedienst noch glänzte,
Wie ganz anders, anders war es da!
Da man deine Tempel noch bekränzte,
Venus Amathusia!

Da der Dichtung zauberische Hülle
Sich noch lieblich um die Wahrheit wand—
Durch die Schöpfung floss da Lebensfülle
Und was nie empfinden wird, empfand.
An der Liebe Busen sie zu drücken,
Gab man höhern Adel der Natur,

Alles wies den eingeweihten Blicken,
Alles eines Gottes Spur.

Wo jetzt nur, wie unsre Weisen sagen,
Seelenlos ein Feuerball sich dreht,
Lenkte damals seinen goldnen Wagen
Helios in stiller Majestät.

While ye governed yet the cheerful nations,—
While the leading-strings in Joy's light hand
Led the fair, the happy generations,—
Beings beautiful, from Fableland!
While they came, your blissful rites to render,
Ah, how different was then the day,
When thy fanes with garlands shone in splendor,
Venus Amathusia!

Then of Poesy the veil enchanted
Sweetly o'er the form of Truth was thrown:
To Creation fullest life was granted,
And from soulless things the spirit shone.
Nature, then, ennobled, elevated,

To the heart of human love was prest;
All things, to the vision consecrated,
All things, then, a God confessed!

Where, as now our sages have decided,
Soulless whirls a ball of fire on high,
Helios, then, his golden chariot guided
Through the silent spaces of the sky.

Diese Höhen füllten Oreaden,
Eine Dryas lebt' in jenem Baum,
Aus den Urnen lieblicher Najaden
Sprang der Ströme Silberschaum.

Misty Oreads dwelt on yonder mountains;
In this tree the Dryad made her home;
Where the Naïads held the urns of fountains
Sprang the stream in silver foam.

Jener Lorbeer wand sich einst um Hülfe,
Tantal's Tochter schweigt in diesem Stein,
Syrinx Klage tönt' aus jenem Schilfe,
Philomela's Schmerz aus diesem Hain.
Jener Bach empfing Demeter's Zähre,
Die sie um Persephonen geweint,
Und von diesem Hügel rief Cythere—
Ach, umsonst! dem schönen Freund.

Yonder laurel once was Daphne flying;
Yonder stone did Niobe restrain:
From these rushes Syrinx once was crying,
From this forest Philomela's pain.
For her daughter Proserpine, the mighty
Ceres wept beside the river's fall;
Here, upon these hills, did Aphrodite
Vainly on Adonis call.

Eure Tempel lachten gleich Palästen,
Euch verherrlichte das Heldenspiel
An des Isthmus kronenreichen Festen,
Und die Wagen donnerten zum Ziel.
Schön geschlungne, seelenvolle Tänze
Kreisten um den prangenden Altar;
Eure Schläfe schmückten Siegeskränze,
Kronen euer duftend Haar.

Then like palaces your fanes were builded:
You the sports of heroes glorified,
At the Isthmian games, with garlands gilded,
When the charioteers in thunder ride.
Breathing grace, the linked and woven dances
Circled round your altars, high and fair;
On your brows the wreath of victory glances,—
Crowns on your ambrosial hair.

Das Evoë muntrer Thyrsusschwinger
Und der Panther prächtiges Gespann
Meldeten den grossen Freudebringer;
Faun und Satyr taumeln ihm voran!
Um ihn springen rasende Mänaden,
Ihre Tänze loben seinen Wein,
Und des Wirthes braune Wangen laden
Lustig zu dem Becher ein.

Shouts of Bachanal and joyous singer,
And the splendid panthers of his car,
Then announced the mighty Rapture-bringer,
With his Fauns and Satyrs, from afar!
Dancing Maenads round his march delight us,
While their dances celebrate his wines,
And the brown cheeks of the host invite us
Where the purple goblet shines.

We now come to the third and most important period of Schiller's life. There was, as I have said, a natural repulsion between him and Goethe, when they first met; but it extended no deeper than the surface of their natures. Goethe was ten years older, and the license of the "Storm and Stress" school, from which Schiller was just emerging, lay far behind him: the lives of the two men had been wholly different: their temperaments had nothing in common: yet both cherished the same secret ambition, both were struggling towards an equally lofty ideal of literary achievement. After Schiller settled in Jena they occasionally met, without being drawn nearer; but in the course of three or four years, various circumstances compelled them to approach. Both stood almost alone, independent of the clans of smaller authors who assailed them; both

felt the need of a generous and intelligent sympathy. Schiller, in 1794, projected a new literary periodical, "*Die Horen*," and Goethe's co-operation was too important to be overlooked. He replied to Schiller's letter in a very friendly spirit, and the two soon afterwards met in Jena. They became engaged in a conversation upon natural science, which was continued through the streets to the door of Schiller's house. Goethe entered, sat down at a table, took a pen and paper, and drew what he called a typical plant, to illustrate some conclusions at which he had arrived in his botanical studies. Schiller examined the drawing carefully, and then said: "This is not an observation, it is an idea." Goethe, as he related long afterwards, was very much annoyed by the remark, because it betrayed a habit of thought so foreign to his own; but he concealed his feeling and quietly answered: "Well, I am glad to find that I can have ideas, without being aware of it." The conversation presently took another turn, and the two poets found various points wherein they harmonized. They parted with the mutual impression that a further and closer intercourse would render them a mutual service; and there is no literary friendship in all history comparable to that which thenceforth united them. Their unlikeness was both the charm and the blessing of their intercourse. Each affected the other, not in regard to manner, or superficial characteristics of style, but by the shock and

encounter of thought, by approaching literature from opposite sides and contrasting their views, by stimulating the better development of each and giving a new spur to his productiveness. The deep and earnest bases of their natures kept them together, in spite of all dissimilarity.

Goethe possessed already the element of repose, which was wanting to Schiller. He had a feeling for the proportion of parts, in a literary work, which Schiller was painfully endeavoring to acquire. His imagination worked from above downward, in order to base itself upon real, palpable forms, while the natural tendency of Schiller's was to get as far away as possible from the reality of things. The difference in their temperaments was also peculiar. Schiller's habit was to discuss his poetic themes in advance of writing—to change and substitute, to add here and cut off there, and so exhaust the modes of treatment of his subject before he began to treat it; while Goethe never dared to communicate any part of his plan in advance. When he did so, he lost all interest in writing it. His judgment was opposed to Schiller's choice of "*Wallenstein*" for dramatic treatment; but he confessed his mistake when the work was finished. Schiller, on the other hand, insisted that Goethe would write a poem in *ottava rima*—rhymed stanzas of eight lines—and was thunderstruck when Goethe sent him the entire manuscript of "*Hermann und Dorothea*," written in hexame-

ters. The thorough independence of the two men is a rare and remarkable feature of their intercourse.

The rich correspondence left to us from those years enables us to restore all the details of Schiller's life and literary labor. The income which he derived from editing and superintending his periodical, "The Hours," was not more than five hundred dollars a year. At the end of seven or eight years it was discontinued for lack of support. Another of the forms of drudgery whereby Schiller earned his bread, was the publication of the "*Musenalmanach*" or "Calendar of the Muses"—an annual volume of poetry. He was obliged to procure contributions from all the principal German poets, to arrange them in proper order, contract for the printing, read the proofs, superintend the binding, pay the authors and send specimen copies to them. The publisher, whose only labor was to sell the books thus furnished to his hands, paid Schiller twenty dollars for every printed sheet of sixteen pages, out of which sum Schiller paid the authors sixteen dollars, reserving four dollars as his own remuneration. His whole profit on the volume was a little less than five hundred dollars, after months of correspondence, of annoyance with tardy printers, and all the interruption which the task caused to his studies.

The completion of "*Wallenstein*" was fortunately delayed by these labors and by the new poetic activity which sprang up through his intercourse with Goethe.

The contact of two such electric intellects struck out constant flashes of light from both. Schiller's poetry, from this time, exhibits a finish, a proportion, a sustained and various music, which shows that his powers were at last reduced to order, and working both joyously and intelligently. Those noble poems, "*Der Spatziergang*" (The Walk) and *Das Lied von der Glocke*" (The Song of the Bell) were soon followed by his famous ballads—some of which are masterpieces of rhythmical narrative. "*Der Taucher*" (The Diver), "*Der Gang nach dem Eisenhammer*" (The Message to the Forge) and "*Der Ring des Polykrates*" (The Ring of Polycrates) are as familiar to all German school-boys as "Lochiel's Warning" or "Young Lochinvar" to ours, and no translation can wholly rob them of their beauty. In them we find no trace of the crudity and extravagance of the poems of the First Period, nor the somewhat artificial, metaphysical character of most of those of the Second Period. The first foaming of the must and the slow second fermentation are over, and we have at last the clear, golden, perfect wine "cellared for eternal time." These ballads might properly be called epical lyrics. Their subjects have an inherent dignity; their style is simple, sustained and noble; their rhetoric has never been surpassed in the German language, and their resounding music can only be compared to that of such English poems as Byron's "Destruction of Sennacherib,"

Macaulay's "Horatius," and Campbell's "Mariners of England."

The connection with Goethe gave rise to another joint literary undertaking, of a very different character, provoked by the continual attacks of Count Stolberg, Novalis, Schlegel and their followers. Up to the year 1796, neither poet had taken any notice of the abuse and misrepresentation heaped upon them; but in the summer of that year, Goethe, who had been reading the Latin *Xenia* of Martial, wrote a few German *Xenia*, directed against his literary enemies. Schiller caught the idea at once; they met and worked together until they had produced several hundred stinging epigrams of two or four lines each, and then they published the collection. It was like disturbing a wasps' nest. The air of Germany was filled with sounds of pain, rage and malicious laughter. As Lewes says: "The sensation produced by Pope's 'Dunciad' and Byron's 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers' was mild compared with the sensation produced by the '*Xenien*,' although the wit and the sarcasm of the '*Xenien*' is like milk and water compared with the vitriol of the 'Dunciad' and the 'English Bards.'" Lewes, however, did not appreciate the peculiar sting of the "*Xenien*," which did not satirize the individual authors or their peculiarities of expression, so much as their intellectual standpoint and their manner of thought. The hostility created by this defence and counter-assault of Goethe

and Schiller lived as long as the persons who suffered from it.

In the year 1799, the dramatic trilogy of "*Wallenstein*" was completed. Instead of the one tragedy which Schiller had planned, seven years before, he had produced three plays—"*Wallensteins Lager*" (Wallenstein's Camp), an introductory act, in eleven scenes, the object of which is to give a picture of soldier-life, towards the close of the Thirty Years' War: "*Die Piccolomini*," which discloses the conspiracy against Wallenstein, and prepares for the tragic sequel of the plot in the third part—"*Wallensteins Tod*" (Wallenstein's Death). I have said that the work was fortunately delayed, because Schiller had not attained his higher development when he began it. The feeling of uncertainty which made him lay it aside from time to time was a true instinct: he waited until he felt that his powers were equal to the task. How much he had learned, may be seen by comparing "*Wallenstein*" and "*Don Carlos*." It is the difference between passion and eloquence and impetuous movement, and the stately, secure march of a mind which has mastered its material. In "*Don Carlos*," we feel that Schiller has expressed himself affirmatively in the hero and the Marquis Posa, and negatively in Philip II. and the Princess Eboli: whereas, in "*Wallenstein*," each character has its own objective life, and the poet seems calmly to chronicle the unfoldings of a plot which is evolved by and from those characters. "*Wallenstein*"

belongs in the first rank of dramatic poems, after those of Shakespeare. Coleridge's Translation gives a fair representation of it in English, although he has sometimes mistaken Schiller's meaning, and sometimes changed the text. The famous passage, referring to the forms of old mythology, which he has added, is very beautiful in itself, but it is dramatically out of place. It may be interesting to you to know just what Schiller wrote, and in what manner Coleridge has amplified the lines. This is the original passage:

Die Fabel ist der Liebe Heimathland;
Gern wohnt sie unter Feen, Talismanen,
Glaubt gern an Götter, weil sie göttlich ist.
Die alten Fabelwesen sind nicht mehr,
Das reizende Geschlecht ist ausgewandert;
Doch eine Sprache braucht das Herz, es bringt
Der alte Trieb die alten Namen wieder,
Und an dem Sternenhimmel gehn sie jetzt,
Die sonst im Leben freundlich mit gewandelt;
Dort winken sie dem Liebenden herab,
Und jedes Grosse bringt uns Jupiter
Noch diesen Tag, und Venus jedes Schöne.

For Fable is the native home of love;
'Mid fays and talismans he loves to dwell,
Believes in Gods, being himself divine.
The ancient forms of fable are no more,
The enchanting race has gone, migrating forth;
Yet needs the heart its language, yet return
The olden names when moves the old desire,
And still in yonder starry heavens they live
Who once, benignant, shared the life of earth;
There, beckoning to the lover, they look down,
And even now 'tis Jupiter that brings
Whate'er is great, and Venus all that's fair!

I will now give the mixture of Schiller and Coleridge:

For Fable is Love's world, his home, his birth-place:
Delightedly dwells he 'mong fays and talismans
And spirits; and delightedly believes
Divinities, being himself divine.
The intelligible forms of ancient poets,
The fair humanities of old religion,
The power, the beauty, and the majesty,
That had their haunts in dale, or piny mountain,
Or forest by slow stream, or pebbly spring,
Or chasms and watery depths; all these have vanished;
They live no longer in the faith of reason!
But still the heart doth need a language, still
Doth the old instinct bring back the old names,
And to yon starry world they now are gone,
Spirits or gods, that used to share this earth
With man, as with their friend; and to the lover
Yonder they move, from yonder visible sky
Shoot influence down: and even at this day
'Tis Jupiter brings whate'er is great,
And Venus who brings everything that's fair!

There is no doubt that Coleridge has here touched to adorn: there is nothing in Schiller's lines so fine as "the fair humanities of old religion"—but his digression is a violation of the dramatic law by which Schiller was governed. We pardon it for its beauty, yet we should be wrong in allowing such a liberty to translators.

In 1799, Schiller removed to Weimar. The Duke, Karl August, influenced by Goethe, offered him a pension of one thousand thalers a year, with the condition that it should be doubled, in case of illness. Schiller, however, refused to accept this condition, saying: "I

have some talent, and that must do the rest." The success of "*Wallenstein*" stimulated him to new labor. During the year 1800, he wrote "*Marie Stuart;*" in 1801, "*Die Jungfrau von Orleans*" (The Maid of Orleans);" and in 1802, *Die Braut von Messina*" (The Bride of Messina). The first and second of these plays were more popular than "*Wallenstein,*" perhaps for the reason that they are inferior as dramatic works. The interest is more obvious, the action is less involved, and there are passages in each full of that power and eloquence which tells so immediately upon an audience. In "The Bride of Messina" Schiller made a very daring experiment. He wrote the play in rhyme, and introduced a chorus, in imitation of the classical drama. All his rhythmical genius, all the splendor of his rhetoric were employed; but the result was, and is to this day, uncertain. The "Bride of Messina" is still occasionally presented on the German stage; but it is listened to more as a brilliant phenomenon than as a confirmed favorite of the public. The innovation has not been naturalized in Germany, and probably never will be.

In the year 1802, at the request of the Duke, the Emperor of Austria conferred a patent of nobility upon Schiller. The cause of this honor was not his genius as a poet, but the circumstance that his wife, losing the *von* out of her name in marrying him, had forfeited her right to appear in Court society—a right which she possessed before her marriage. Of course the rules of

the Court could not be broken, or the Earth might have been shaken from its orbit; so the only way in which the *Frau* Schiller could recover her lost aristocracy was to make her husband Friedrich *von* Schiller. It was only for her sake that he accepted the title: it enabled him to repay her for the conventional sacrifice which she had made in marrying him. It is true, nevertheless, that he was far from being democratic in his political views. The Democracy of Germany celebrates him as its special poet, and condemns Goethe for his aristocratic predilections. This impression is so fixed that it is now almost impossible to change it; yet, if there was any difference between the two poets, Goethe was certainly the more democratic. It seems to me that Schiller's intellectual revolt against authority in his youth, combined with the intense yearning for spiritual growth and spiritual freedom which throbs like an immortal pulse of life through all his later works, must be accepted as the explanation. Such expressions as "Freedom exists only in the realm of dreams," and "The Poet should walk with Kings, for both dwell upon the heights of humanity"—certainly do not indicate a political feeling at all republican in its character. In 1814, Goethe said to Eckermann: "People seem not to be willing to see me as I am, and turn away their eyes from everything which might set me in a true light. On the other hand, Schiller, who was much more of an aristocrat than I, but who was also much more considerate

in regard to what he said, had the remarkable fortune of being always looked upon as a friend of the people. I do not grudge him his good luck: I console myself with the knowledge that others before me have had the same experience."

As Schiller's life drew towards a close, the outward evidences of his success came to cheer and encourage him. In Leipzig, in 1803, and in Berlin, in 1804, he was received with every mark of honor. The King of Prussia offered him a salary of three thousand thalers, to take charge of the Royal theatre, but he refused to give up Weimar, and the intercourse with Goethe, which had now become an intellectual necessity. His last great work, by some critics pronounced to be his greatest dramatic success, was the play of "*Wilhelm Tell*," the subject of which, and part of the material, he owed to Goethe. It is a pleasant illustration of the manner in which the two poets assisted each other. When Goethe visited Switzerland in 1797, he formed the idea of writing an epic poem, with Tell as the hero. He made studies of the scenery, collected historical data, and for two or three years carried the plan about with him, letting it slowly mature in his mind, as was his habit of composition. He finally decided to give it up, but, feeling that the subject was better adapted to dramatic representation than epic narrative, he gave his material to Schiller, reserving only a description of sunrise among the Alps, which is now to be found in

the first scene of the Second Part of "*Faust.*" The intense, glowing quality of Schiller's imagination soon assimilated this foreign material, and in none of his works is there such a fusion of subject, scenery and sentiment. From the first page to the last, the reader —or the hearer—is set among the valleys of the Alps, and surrounded by a brave and oppressed people. Historians may attempt to show that there never was either a William Tell or a Gessler—that the whole story is a myth, borrowed from Denmark, but Schiller has made Tell a real person for all time. As he says, in one of his lyrics:

Was sich nie und nirgends hat begeben,
Das allein veraltet nie.

There are serious dramatic faults in the work, but they never can affect its popularity. It has that exquisite beauty and vitality which defy criticism. The diction has all the dignity of that of "*Wallenstein,*" with an ease and grace of movement, which cannot be called new in Schiller, and which exhibits the perfection of his best qualities. If any one supposes that the German language is harsh and unmusical, let him listen to the song of the fisher-boy, rocking in his boat on the lake, with which the drama opens:

FISCHERKNABE.	FISHER-BOY.
Es lächelt der See, er ladet zum Bade,	Inviting the bather, the bright lake is leaping;
Der Knabe schlief ein am grünen Gestade,	The fisher-boy lies on its margin a-sleeping:

Da hört er ein Klingen,
Wie Flöten so süss,
Wie Stimmen der Engel
Im Paradies.
Und, wie er erwachet in seliger Lust,
Da spülen die Wasser ihm um die Brust.
Und es ruft aus den Tiefen:
Lieb Knabe bist mein!

Ich locke den Schläfer,
Ich zieh ihn herein.

HIRT.

Ihr Matten, lebt wohl!
Ihr sonnigen Weiden!
Der Senne muss scheiden,

Der Sommer ist hin.
Wir fahren zu Berg, wir kommen wieder,
Wenn der Kukuk ruft, wenn erwachen die Lieder,
Wenn mit Blumen die Erde sich kleidet neu,
Wenn die Brünnlein fliessen im lieblichen Mai.
Ihr Matten, lebt wohl!
Ihr sonnigen Weiden!
Der Senne muss scheiden,

Der Sommer ist hin.

ALPENJÄGER.

Es donnern die Höhen, es zittert der Steg,
Nicht grauet dem Schützen auf schwindlichtem Weg;

Then hears he a music
Like flutes in its tone,
Like voices of angels
In Eden alone.
And as he awakens, enraptured and blest,
The waters are whirling around his breast;
And a voice from the waters
Says: "mine thou must be!
I wait for the sleeper,
I lure him to me!"

HERDSMAN.

Ye meadows, farewell!
Ye sunniest pastures,
The herdsman must leave you,
The summer is gone.
We go from the hills, we come ere long
When the cuckoo calls, and the sound of song;
When the earth with blossoms again is gay,
When the fountains gush in the lovely May.
Ye meadows, farewell!
Ye sunniest pastures,
The herdsman must leave you,
The summer is gone.

ALPINE HUNTER.

The avalanche thunders, the bridges are frail,
The hunter is fearless, though dizzy the trail:

Er schreitet verwegen
Auf Feldern von Eis;
Da pranget kein Frühling,
Da grünet kein Reis;
Und, unter den Füssen ein neblichtes Meer,
Erkennt er die Städte der Menschen nicht mehr;
Durch den Riss nur der Wolken
Erblickt er die Welt,
Tief unter den Wassern
Das grünende Feld.

He strides in his daring
O'er deserts of snows,
Where Spring never blossoms
And grass never grows,
And the mists like an ocean beneath him are tost,
Till the cities of men to his vision are lost.
Through the rifts of the cloud-land
The far world gleams,
And the green fields under
The Alpine streams.

Such is the musical overture of Alpine life with which Schiller opens the drama.

He never recovered from the inflammation of the lungs, which attacked him in 1791. During the last ten or twelve years of his life he was rarely free from pain, but his mind seems to have been always clear and vigorous, and his astonishing industry was really a necessity to his nature. He lived in his art, and was happy in recognizing his own progress towards a lofty and far-off ideal. In order to avoid interruption, he contracted the habit of writing wholly at night, and of keeping off drowsiness by setting his feet in a tub of cold water. He was physician enough to know that he was shortening his life by such an unnatural habit of labor, but his literary conscience was inexorable. For him there was no rest, no relaxation. No sooner was "William Tell" given to the stage, and triumphantly greeted by the

public, than he began a new dramatic poem, taking for his hero the false Demetrius, who imposed himself on the Russian boyards as the true heir to the throne, and reigned for some months in Moscow. In the spring of 1805, when midway in his work, he was seized with a chill at the theatre, and went home, never to leave his door again as a living man. A few hours before his death, he seemed to realize his condition, and uttered the words: "Death cannot be an evil, for it is universal." He died on the 9th of May, aged forty-five years and six months. His remains now rest in a granite sarcophagus, by the side of Goethe, in the vault of the Ducal family at Weimar.

In carefully studying Schiller's life and works, and contrasting his position in German literature with that of his contemporaries, we are struck with a certain discrepancy between his fame and his achievement. With all his rare and admirable qualities, we cannot place him higher than in the second rank of poets—in the list which includes Virgil, Tasso, Corneille, Spenser and Byron. Yet his place in popular estimation, not only in Germany, but throughout the educated world, is certainly among the first. His fame is of that kind which depends partly upon the sympathetic attraction that sometimes surrounds an individual life,—in other words, the interest of character is added to the intellectual recognition of the poet. We may say that a character so positive as Schiller's breathes through his literary

records, and cannot be disconnected from his intellect; but we shall only state the same fact in a different form. To other poets—to Tasso, Burns and Byron—the same personal interest is attached, yet in no one does it spring from that lofty, unceasing devotion to a noble literary Ideal, which gave its consecration to Schiller's life. Like Lessing, he sought Truth, but not in the realm of fact. To him she was not a severe, naked form, beautiful as a statue, but as hard and cold; she was rather a shape of air and light, poised above the confusion of life, in a region of aspiration and hope. The sense of her beauty came to Schiller through sentiment and sensation, as well as through the intellect; and herein he touches the universal yearning of Man.

His power over the harmonies of language was never so grandly manifested as in some passages of Homer, Milton and Goethe; but it is more uniformly fine than in almost any other poet. From the tones of a flute or a wind-harp he rises to the strength and resonance of an organ, and in many of his lyrics the rich volume of sound rolls unbroken to the end. His language sometimes reflects the struggle of his thought to shape itself clearly; but it is always pure and elevated, and his lines and stanzas cling to the memory with wonderful tenacity. These qualities, which address themselves primarily to the ear, support his sentiment and thought, and bear them, as if unconsciously, into a higher atmosphere of poetry. There is an upward tendency—a lifting of the

intellectual vision, a stirring as of unfolding wings—in almost everything he has written. He is an example of a genius, not naturally of the highest order, carried by the force of an aspiring, enthusiastic, believing temperament almost to a level with the highest. Where so many others lose faith and cease exertion, he began. That is the difference between the Schiller of "The Robbers" and the Schiller of "Wallenstein" and the Ballads.

Carlyle says of him: "Schiller has no trace of vanity; scarcely of pride, even in its best sense, for the modest self-consciousness which characterizes genius is with him rather implied than openly expressed. He has no hatred; no anger, save against Falsehood and Baseness, where it may be called a holy anger. Presumptuous triviality stood bared in his keen glance: but his look is the noble scowl that curls the lip of an Apollo, when, pierced with sun-arrows, the serpent expires before him. In a word, we can say of Schiller what can only be said of a few in any country or time: He was a high ministering servant at Truth's altar, and bore him worthily of the office he held. . . . . His intellectual character has an accurate conformity with his moral one. Here, too, he is simple in his excellence; lofty rather than expansive or varied; pure, divinely ardent rather than great."

I have allowed myself no space to examine Schiller's works in detail, because it is better first to define the

place which his life occupies in the literary history of Germany, and his individual characteristics as a poet. Though disparaged by the Stolbergs, Riemer and others, and exalted by Börne and a class of later writers above Goethe, he has fixed his own true place at the side of the latter, lower through the opportunities of life, lower in breadth of intellect and the development of all the faculties, but equal in aspiration and equal in his own field of achievement. His life is an open book for whoever chooses to read it. All his early impatience and extravagance, all the struggles through which he rose, the steps whereby he climbed to a knowledge of himself and his art, are revealed to our gaze; but when the history closes, we leave him in the ripeness, the harmony, the joyous activity of his powers, and this final impression is the standard by which we measure his fame.

No German poet since Schiller has equalled his magnificent rhythm and rhetoric. The language has been made sweeter, clearer, more flexible: it has caught new varieties of movement and melody: it has been forced to reflect the manner of many new minds, yet in the qualities I have mentioned Schiller is still the climax of performance.

I can find no more fitting words to close this review of a life measured by heart-throbs and brain-throbs, rather than by years, than the stanzas which Goethe dedicated to his memory, as an epilogue to the "Song

of the Bell," when it was represented in Weimar, in the year 1815:

" Denn er war unser ! Mag das stolze Wort
Den lauten Schmerz gewaltig übertönen !
Er mochte sich bei uns, im sichern Port
Nach wildem Sturm zum Dauernden gewhönen.
Indessen schritt sein Geist gewaltig fort
Ins Ewige des Wahren, Guten, Schönen,
Und hinter ihm, in wesenlosem Scheine,
Lag, was uns Alle bändigt, das Gemeine.

Nun glühte seine Wange roth und röther
Von jener Jugend, die uns nie entfliegt,
Von jenem Muth, der früher oder später,
Den Wiederstand der stumpfen Welt besiegt,
Von jenem Glauben, der sich stets erhöhter
Bald kühn hervordrängt, bald geduldig schmiegt,
Damit das Gute wirke, wachse, fromme,
Damit der Tag dem Edlen endlich komme !"

For he was ours ! Be this proud consciousness
A spell that shall subdue our lamentation !
He sought with us a harbor from the stress
Of storms, a more enduring inspiration.
While with strong step his mind did forward press
To Good, Truth, Beauty, in its pure creation,
And far behind him lay, a formless vision,
The vulgar power that fetters our ambition.

And thus his cheek grew red, and redder ever,
From that fair youth whose wings are never furled,
That courage, crowned at last, whose proud endeavor
Tames the resistance of the stubborn world,—
That faith, that onward, upward, mounts forever,
Now patient waiting, now in conflict hurled,
That so the Good shall work, increase and sway,
And for the noble man shall dawn a nobler day !

X.

GOETHE.

In considering the central figure of the great age of German literature—the god, he might be called, who sits alone on the summit of the German Parnassus—I feel how impossible it is to give more than the merest outline of a life which was both broad and long, of an activity unbroken for more than sixty years, and covering in its range nearly every department of Literature, Art and Science. If a cabinet-picture will suffice for Klopstock and Wieland, a life-size sketch for Lessing and Schiller, I feel the need of a canvas of heroic proportions when I come to portray Goethe.

If I were not afraid of falling into the fault which I have attributed to the German mind—of constructing a theory wherever the operation is possible—I might trace a gradual order of development in the authors who preceded Goethe, and show how his intellect, possessing the supreme quality which was lacking in them, both individually and collectively, became the crowning element in German literature. But it will be enough to say that he was born "in the fullness of time"—when Klopstock, Lessing, Wieland and Herder were already

upon the stage; and that the experience prepared for him by their labors was precisely that which his development required. In the case of Klopstock, we have a useful and fortunate, though not a great life; in Lessing and Schiller, a life of struggle, nobly endured; in Wieland and Herder, lives of change, of action and ambition, fruitful in influence; but in Goethe we find a long, rich, and wholly fortunate life, almost unparalleled in its results. In him there is no unfulfilled promise, no fragmentary destiny: he stands as complete and symmetrical and satisfactory as the Parthenon.

I can best represent his achievements by connecting them with the events of his life; and must therefore give an outline of his biography. If many of you are already familiar with the principal facts, you will pardon me for repeating them, since I can thus best describe the man. Johann Wolfgang Goethe was born in Frankfort on the Main, on the 28th of August, 1749. His father, the Councillor Goethe, was a man of wealth, education and high social position; his mother was the daughter of the Imperial Councillor Textor. These officials of the free city of Frankfort considered themselves on a par with the nobility of other German lands, and were equally proud and dignified in their bearing. Goethe was not only a marvelous child, but he enjoyed marvelous advantages, from his very birth. His mother invented fairy stories for his early childhood; he learned French from an officer quartered in his father's house;

the best teachers were provided for him, and when only eight years old, he was able to write—not very correctly, of course—in the German, French, Italian, Greek and Latin languages. His beauty, his precocious talent, his bright, sparkling, loveable nature, procured him an indulgent freedom rarely granted to children, and gave him at the start that independence and self-reliance which he preserved through life. He began to compose even before he began to write: expression, in his case, was co-existent with feeling and thought. Before he was twelve years old, he planned and partly wrote a romance which illustrates his wonderful acquirements. The characters are seven brothers and sisters, scattered in different parts of Europe. One of them writes in German, one in French, one in English, one in Italian, one in Latin and Greek, and another in the Jewish-German dialect. The study of the latter led him to Hebrew, which he kept up long enough to read a portion of the Bible. At an age when most boys are struggling unwillingly with the rudiments of knowledge, he had laid a broad basis for all future studies, and grasped with passionate eagerness every opportunity of anticipating them. There have been similar instances of precocity, but the informing and mastering genius was lacking. The boy Goethe assimilated and turned to immediate use all that he learned. His creative power was developed many years in advance of the usual period. He soon became a hero in the youthful society of Frankfort

—a poet, an improvisatore and a wit, astonishing his associates by his brilliancy and daring, and at the same time offending his stern, respectable father.

In 1765, at the age of sixteen, he was sent to the University of Leipzig, to study jurisprudence; but he soon wearied of that study, as well as of logic and rhetoric, as they were then taught. Except botany and mineralogy, he neglected all graver studies, gave up much of his time to society, and imagined himself in love with a maiden two or three years older than himself. His life at Leipzig, it must be confessed, was very wild and irregular. The scornful independence of others, which he asserted, began to show itself in excesses, and at the end of three years he went home with hemorrhage of the lungs and a tumor on his neck. More than a year was needed for his entire recovery, and during this period the better forces of his nature began to assert themselves. He regained his lost balance: his literary aspirations revived, and gradually grew into earnestness and coherence.

In his twenty-first year he was sent to Strassburg, to continue his legal studies, but already carrying with him the plan of his first famous work—the tragedy of "*Götz von Berlichingen.*" During the seclusion of his illness, he had occupied himself chiefly with alchemy and mystic speculation. The seed of the future "*Faust*" was even then sown, and it was not long before it began to germinate. But the greatest fortune of his residence

in Strassburg was his acquaintance with Herder, who was five years older than Goethe, and at that time of a graver and profounder temperament. The two men were very much unlike, and they never became intimate friends; but there is no doubt that Herder's companionship and counsel, during the six months they spent together, was of great value in weaning Goethe from the lawless, impulsive mood into which he had fallen. He was suddenly seized with a desire to overcome everything which seemed like a weakness in his nature. He cured his tendency to giddiness, on looking down from heights, by climbing the spire of Strassburg Cathedral every day. He had a constitutional dread of the supernatural, without believing in it; so he went into graveyards at midnight; he disliked loud voices, and therefore went as near as possible to the drums of the military band. He was easily affected by a sense of disgust, and for that reason attended the dissections of the medical class. He also studied electricity, wrote a pamphlet on Gothic architecture, and withal, qualified himself for the degree of *Doctor Juris*, which he received in a little more than a year. Returning to Frankfort, he first re-wrote the tragedy of "*Götz von Berlichingen*," and was then sent by his father to practice in the Imperial Chancery at Wetzlar, a small town near Giessen. But he remained there only a few months, occupying himself much more with literature than with law. His tragedy was again revised, and was then published in

the spring of 1773. Its popularity was immediate and universal. Compared with Schiller's "Robbers," produced at very nearly the same age, every reader will feel the great superiority of "*Götz.*" Here there is nothing crude, and little that is purely subjective. The piece is full of life and movement, and the touch of a master is seen in the delineation of every character. In regard to form, Goethe undoubtedly owed something both to Shakespeare and Lessing, but his management of the historic material is entirely his own. His literary fame was secured at one blow. It is worthy of remark that the translation of "*Götz von Berlichingen*" was Walter Scott's first essay in literature.

The attention of such men as Zimmermann, Lavater, and Klopstock was attracted towards Goethe by this work. His name began to be known throughout Germany: he was astonished at his sudden popularity, and considered it, at first, a lucky accident. Soon after the publication of "*Götz,*" the young prince Karl August of Weimar passed through Frankfurt, and sent for Goethe. This was the beginning of a friendship which lasted for fifty-five years, and determined the external circumstances of Goethe's life. Law was now entirely given up, and Goethe, again an inmate of his father's house for two or three years, gave all his time to literature. He planned a tragedy to be called "*Mohammed,*" a fragment of which survives, wrote several admirable lyrics, and produced his satire, called "*Götter, Helden*

und Wieland" (Gods, Heroes, and Wieland). In 1774, two years after the events upon which the book is founded had occurred, he published "*Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*" (The Sorrows of Werther). The history of this work, the prodigious sensation which it produced, and the character of its influence contrasted with the author's design, make it a phenomenon in the annals of literature. The "Storm and Stress" period, to which I have referred, was then approaching its climax. Although "*Götz von Berlichingen*" is remarkably free from its spirit, Goethe could no more escape the infection than a child can escape the mumps or the measles. His powerful nature experienced every symptom of the disease in an aggravated form, and then healed itself. Although no poet ever made freer use of his own sensations and experiences—his joy, suffering, passion and aspiration—yet his habit was to wait until the experience had passed, then holding it firmly apart from him—as a man might hold an amputated limb, wherein every nerve is dead—to make it an intellectual study. He revives the tempest, and lets it rage around him; but in the centre there is a vortex of calm, where he sits and controls it. "*Werther*" is a psychological study of this character. Goethe combined his own experience with the tragical fate of a man whom he knew, and produced what is generally called a sentimental story, but which is really a remarkable dissection of a typical character. But it was not so received and understood. All Europe

dissolved in a gush of emotion over its pages. It was hailed as the triumph and justification of the sentimental school, and a whole literature of imitations, parodies and criticisms followed it.

Although we cannot divide the literary life of Goethe into periods, like that of Schiller, because his growth was not only steady and symmetrical, but also because some of his faculties were nearly perfect at the start, yet there are occasional pauses in his activity and variations in its character. The one important change in his external life now occurred. In September, 1775, the Duke Karl August invited Goethe to visit him at Weimar. This visit, which lasted two months, was followed by an invitation to accept a permanent situation at the Court, with the title of Privy Councillor, and a salary of twelve hundred thalers a year. In spite of his father's opposition, Goethe accepted the offer, and thenceforth Weimar was his home. The appointment of an untitled poet to a place which tradition required to be filled only by a noble, was a great scandal throughout Germany; but the wild and rather grotesque life led by the Duke and Goethe gave much greater offence. Their chief object seemed to be, to violate all the sacred conventionalities of German courts. They appeared in society in top-boots, cracked whips together in the public market-place, plunged into the river Ilm at midnight, and conducted themselves altogether more like boys playing truant than a pair of dignified personages. For some

years Goethe's productiveness slackened, because there was now no external incitement, and the internal impulse gave way, for a time, to his hearty delight in active physical life. It was his habit to carry a poetical conception for a long time in his brain, allowing it to develop by its own force, until the proper mood and leisure for its delivery arrived: then it was put into words with a rapidity and artistic completion which astonished his friends, who did not guess how much of the labor had been silently performed in advance. So, now, while he seemed indolent, the dramatic poems of "*Iphigenie auf Tauris*," "*Tasso*," and "*Egmont*" were in progress, and portions of the first two were even written in prose. After three years of free, unrestrained life with the Duke, he began to weary of balls, hunts and picnics, and withdrew more and more from the society of the Court. He was eight years older than the Duke, and "the intoxication of youth" (to use his own words) was over with him that much earlier. The inseparable companionship was broken off, although the Duke was steadfast in his friendship. In 1782, Goethe was made President of the Chamber, and ennobled. The death of his father, in the same year, having made him comparatively wealthy, he determined to carry out his long-cherished plan of a journey to Italy; but four years still intervened before he succeeded in leaving Weimar. During this time he began to write his philosophical romance of "*Wilhelm*

Meister," which was not published until long afterwards.

At last, in 1786, secretly and under an assumed name, he set out for Italy, where he remained for nearly two years, residing alternately in Venice, Florence, Rome, Naples and Sicily. It appears to have been a period of pure and perfect enjoyment. After ten years of distractions, his time was wholly his own. He practised painting, for which he always had a passion, studied classic art, correcting and elevating thereby his poetic ideal, and worked faithfully upon the plans he had carried with him. The "*Iphigenie auf Tauris*" and "*Egmont*" were completed, and "*Tasso*" commenced, before he visited Sicily. I have seen an original manuscript letter, which he wrote from Naples to his servant in Weimar, giving as minute and enthusiastic an account of his literary labors, as if it had been written to a brother author. His little song of "*Kennst du das Land*" expresses the strength of the longing which drew him to Italy, and he was not deceived in the real experience. When, in 1788, he left Italy to return to Weimar, it was with a feeling of regret so strong that he was positively unhappy for months afterwards.

The "*Iphigenie auf Tauris,*" which now appeared, is one of the noblest dramatic poems in any language. As Schiller truly said, it is not Greek, but neither can it be called German. It moves in a higher region than

that where the signs of time and race may still be read. From the opening lines :

> " Hinaus in eu're Schatten, rege Wipfel
> Des alten, heil'gen, dicht-belaubten Haines,"

to the closing farewell of Thoas, the reader breathes the purest ether of poetry. Its grandeur is inherent in the lines, and its finest passages seem to exist of themselves, rather than to have been elaborated by the thought of years. It is a poem in dramatic form, not a drama; and the same distinction will apply to " *Tasso.*" Neither is adapted to the stage. " *Iphigenie*" was acted by the Court at Weimar, Goethe taking the part of Orestes, and the Duke that of Pylades; but at Weimar Sophocles was performed,—the high cultivation which prevailed there rendering even that possible. " *Tasso*" may also be called a psychological study. It is almost without action, and is monotonous in tone, but it abounds in fine passages. It is a poem, however, which will never be generally appreciated, except by poets. In " *Egmont*" Goethe achieved a theatrical success. This tragedy is still more frequently performed than any of his other dramas.

Three such works as these should have placed Goethe at once at the head of German literature; but they seem to have made an impression upon a comparatively small number, at the time of their appearance. The author's genius was felt everywhere, but it disturbed to a greater

extent than it gave delight. He stood almost alone: Klopstock was unfriendly, Herder was jealous and sensitive, Schiller was still shy and doubtful, and Wieland, who never was else than a large-hearted friend, could give him no satisfactory support. Although, fifteen years before, the nerves of all Europe had been shattered by his "*Werther*," and his name was as well known as that of Rousseau or Voltaire, yet, when the collected edition of his works was published in Leipzig, in 1790, — an edition containing "*Götz*," "*Iphigenie*" "*Tasso*," "*Egmont*," much of the First Part of "*Faust*," and his exquisite songs and lyrics—the publisher complained that the sale was not sufficient to pay his expenses! Those whom he had offended, or who were jealous of his genius or his fortune, now formed quite a large class, including many authors in the flush of a transient popularity. He never betrayed his feelings in such matters, but it is evident that his exclusive devotion to science for some years was partly the consequence of a discouragement in regard to his literary work. It is hardly within my province, at present, to speak of Goethe as a man of science, but I may at least mention that his studies in osteology had already resulted in his discovery of the inter-maxillary bone; that his studies in botany led him to the composition of a really important work on the "Metamorphoses of Plants," and that his "Science of Colors" was for a while accepted (though not generally by opticians) as

having superseded Newton's. He was an eager if not a very thorough observer; but, being a poet, he was sometimes inclined to depend rather on his scientific intuitions than on the laborious observation of Nature. In this respect he differed from Humboldt, while he resembled him in his insatiable thirst for knowledge and his untiring industry. We cannot say that the time he devoted to natural science was lost, even if it had been less fruitful in results, for at the same time he made himself acquainted with the metaphysical systems of Kant, Fichte and Hegel, and all those bones and stones kept him close to solid fact while his mind was occupied with pure intellectual speculations. He was never German enough to lose his way in those misty realms, yet it was certainly an advantage to have a basis of reality under his feet.

In 1794, nearly six years after Goethe's first interview with Schiller, the two came together again—this time, only to be separated by death. It was not long before the effect of this close intercourse with another spirit, as restlessly creative as his own, began to show itself in Goethe's return to poetry. He was then about publishing the first part of "*Wilhelm Meister*"—the "*Lehrjahre*" or "Apprenticeship,"—and Schiller's friendly intelligent criticism of the work in manuscript was an encouragement which he had not felt for years. This work, which has been admirably translated by Carlyle, might be called a philosophical romance. It is a sin-

gular compound of pictures of life, so plain and realistic that they sometimes become actually coarse, with theories of society, labor and education so refined that they frequently lose all practical character. The faults of the work are as positive as its beauties; but it had no antetype in literature. Parts of it, such as the episode of Mignon, the criticism on Hamlet, and the detached aphorisms scattered through it, are generally known and admired, but the work, as a whole, is only relished by those readers who are able to think for themselves while they follow the thoughts of another. By a large class it is considered immoral, because some of the characters introduced are not always better than they should be. The best answer to this charge is given by one of Goethe's most intelligent critics. "In '*Wilhelm Meister*,'" he says, "there is a complete absence of all moral verdict on the part of the author. Characters tread the stage, events pass before our eyes, things are done, and thoughts are expressed; but no word comes from the author respecting the moral bearing of those things. Life forgets in activity all moral verdict. The good is beneficent, but no one praises it; the bad works evil, but no one anathematizes it." This description is entirely correct, and it would apply equally to much of Shakespeare. Our American taste of the present day would hardly be satisfied with a fiction, wherein the good and the bad characters are simply presented, as we see them in ordinary life. An author's principles

are suspected unless he denounces the one and praises the other,—or, at least, heightens the colors so that we shall detect the undercurrent of his own preferences. No man, however, will ever read "*Wilhelm Meister*" as he reads a certain class of modern romances, for the sake of gratifying an immoral taste: to all except persons of genuine intellect and culture, it is a sealed book.

Another result of Goethe's intercourse with Schiller was the re-awakening of his lyrical genius. He himself compares the effect upon his poetic faculty to that of a second spring, wherein a thousand germs of thought, long lying dormant, suddenly sprouted and blossomed. A conception which once entered his brain never was forgotten. Even the idea of a simple little ballad would linger with him for years. So when Schiller and he agreed to write a number of brief narrative poems, he had only to free his mind of the material which had already accumulated there. Some of his finest and most celebrated poems—such as "*Die Braut von Corinth*" (The Bride of Corinth), "*Der Gott und die Bajadere*" (The God and the Bayadere), "*Der Fischer*" (The Fisher), and "*Der Erlkönig*" (The Erl-King) were written at this time. He also arranged for Schiller's periodical, "The Hours," two collections of short epigrammatic poems, written in the classic distich, and called "*Die Römischen Elegien*" (The Roman Elegies) and "*Die Vier Jahreszeiten*" (The Four Seasons). These are masterpieces of poetic art. They, and Schiller's

noble poem of "*Der Spaziergang*" have naturalized the ancient elegiac measure in the German language. The only successful English example I know of, is in the short introductory passages of Clough's "Amours de Voyage." I cannot resist the temptation of quoting a few couplets from the "*Jahreszeiten*":

1.

"Auf, ihr Distichen, frisch! Ihr muntern lebendigen Knaben!
Reich ist Garten und Feld! Blumen zum Kranze herbei!

2.

Reich ist an Blumen die Flur; doch einige sind nur dem Auge,
Andre dem Herzen nur schön; wähle dir, Leser, nun selbst!

3.

Rosenknospe, du bist dem blühenden Mädchen gewidmet,
Die als die Herrlichste sich, als die Bescheidenste zeigt.

4.

Viele der Veilchen zusammen geknüpft, das Sträusschen erscheint
Erst als Blume; du bist, häusliches Mädchen, gemeint.

5.

Eine kannt' ich, sie war wie die Lilie schlank, und ihr Stolz war
Unschuld; herrlicher hat Salomo Keine gesehn.

6.

Schön erhebt sich der Agley und senkt das Köpfchen herunter.
Ist es Gefühl? oder ist's Muthwill? Ihr rathet es nicht."

I regret that I cannot find a translation of "The God and the Bayadere" which at all reproduces its compact power of expression and its majestic rhythm; indeed, these minor poems of Goethe almost defy translation.

In many of them the sentiment is as airy and delicate, the charm as easy to feel and as difficult to define, as in the songs of Shakespeare. His mastery over all the powers and possibilities of the language was so marvelous, that an almost equal mastery of the resources of the English language is required in one who attempts to reproduce them.

A few years ago, among the correspondence of the publisher Vieweg, of Brunswick, a letter of Goethe's was found, consisting of these two sentences: "If you are willing to publish the contents of the accompanying sealed package, send me two hundred ducats (about eight hundred dollars). If you decline, return the package with the seals unbroken." This was a hard condition for the publisher: he deliberated a day or two, then sent the two hundred ducats, and opened the package. It contained the pastoral epic of "*Hermann und Dorothea*," one of Goethe's most perfect works. We happen to know, through his correspondence with Schiller and others, the manner in which it was written. Goethe had finished the "*Achilleïs*," which we can only call an imitation of Homer, and was encouraged by Schiller to write a poem on the subject of Nausikäa. But the work dragged: by a sudden revulsion of feeling, Goethe turned to the life of his own day, took up a subject which had been waiting six or seven years in his brain, planned and arranged it during his official journeys through the Duchy, and then wrote it in the

course of a few weeks of summer leisure. We have his own word for the statement that more than half of it was written in nine consecutive days. It was one of his most fortunate inspirations. The perplexed publisher was lucky in his venture, for the poem not only revived Goethe's popularity, but stamped upon the literary circles of Germany the impression of his true power. "Hermann and Dorothea" is the simplest possible idyl of common life. The characters of the parents, the young man and the maiden, the clergyman and the apothecary are drawn with exquisite truth and reality; the measure is fluent as prose, yet flatters the ear like rhyme; the language is the simplest possible, poetic in its essence, not from ornament, and the events of the story, occupying not more than two days, are so naturally and artlessly evolved, that the reader follows them with pure and perfect enjoyment, from beginning to end. I care not what may be said against the use of hexameter in modern literature: in "Hermann and Dorothea" it is a thorough success. Goethe understood, as many poets do not, the importance of form as a vehicle of thought. With all his acquired self-control, his intellectual nature was as sensitive as a wind-harp to the lightest breeze of imagination; but he had the power of retaining every passing strain, every fugitive tone, until they grew to a connected melody. Then he sought for the one form which might most fitly express it, very much as the sculptor seeks

for a living model, to assist in bringing out the ideal figure in his brain. He never lost sight of the real truth of Nature, but the commonest scenes and events, in passing through his mind are saturated with a subtle element of poetry. This is nowhere so wonderfully illustrated as in "Hermann and Dorothea," and we can readily understand that it was that one of his works to which he turned with the most satisfaction in his old age.

After Schiller's death, in 1805, Goethe lost for a time his interest in literature. Within a year and a half the battle of Jena occurred, and Weimar was sacked by the French army. It was perhaps the insecurity of his life at the time which led him to marry the mother of his son, with whom he had been living for seventeen years —or, rather, the sense of insecurity led her to consent to the marriage, which she had refused up to that time. Nothing in Goethe's life has been so misunderstood and misrepresented as his relation to Christiane Vulpius. When I was last in Weimar, I discovered a great many facts which throw an entirely new light on this subject. Christiane was an uneducated woman, from a much lower rank in society; but she understood Goethe's nature as no one else did.

Goethe's first important work, after the death of Schiller, was his novel of the "*Wahlverwandtschaften*," which has been translated "The Elective Affinities." It is much more compact, and, as a story, more coherent than "*Wilhelm Meister*." His scientific pursuits

absorbed a great deal of his time during the early years of this century, but he found time to write an autobiography under the title of "*Wahrheit und Dichtung*" (Truth and Fiction), and in his sixty-fifth year commenced the study of the Persian and the Arabic languages. At a time when the world supposed that the period of his poetic activity was over, his "*West-Östlicher Divan*," suddenly appeared. It is a collection of short poems, two or three hundred in number, German in spirit and Oriental in character. In them the fire of a second youth glows and throbs through the wisdom of age. Some of the most beautiful brief lyrics he ever wrote are contained in this collection. This was the source whence Count Platen and Rückert drew their Oriental inspiration. The impression it produced was so strong that it almost created a new fashion in literature. By this time Goethe had outlived the jealousy and the enmity which had so long assailed him. Kotzebue was powerless; Novalis and Nicolai were dead; Schlegel was silent; the Stolbergs were forgotten; and a new generation had grown up, to whom the poet was an acknowledged power. The race was not yet sufficiently developed to appreciate his best work, but they could reverence without reaching that point. He had also withdrawn from official duties. His time was his own; society came to him at his own convenience, and his life thenceforth was quiet, serene, yet still unweariedly active.

He conducted a periodical called "*Kunst und Alterthum*," (Art and Antiquity), and wrote a number of scientific essays, but undertook no larger work until after his seventieth year, when he completed "*Wilhelm Meister*." From his seventy-fifth to his eighty-first year, he wrote the Second Part of "*Faust*," dictated his "Annals," and revised the complete edition of his works, in forty volumes. It is a remarkable fact, showing the little protection accorded to literature in Germany during the lives of her greatest authors, that this complete edition could only be secured against reprints by other publishers, through a special act of the German Diet, which was granted in 1826. It is doubtful whether Goethe received more than twenty or thirty thousand dollars from his works during the whole of his life; but his grand-children received fortunes from them.

The end came slowly on, like the sinking of the sun, in a cloudless sky. In 1828 the Duke, Karl August, died; soon after, his widow, the Duchess Luise; then, Goethe's only son, and he was left alone, still grand and erect in body, and with every sign of intellectual vigor. He was one of the handsomest men that ever lived: the bust taken in Rome is finer than the head of the Apollo. Even eighty years could not bend his figure or dim the splendor of his dark-brown eyes: the Apollo had only grown into the Olympian Jove. Rückert, in a noble poem, wished for him the fate of the Persian

poets, Saadi and Djami, who counted a hundred years, but some hidden part of the machinery had worn out, and a very slight cause brought it to a full stop. He died on the 22d of March, 1832, in his eighty-third year.

Karl August directed in his will, that his body should be placed between those of Goethe and Schiller. This was more than the rigid laws of German Courts could endure: the will was disregarded. The two poets rest side by side, in the Ducal vault, but at a proper distance from the reigning family. Yet their sarcophagi, and that of their one princely friend, are those which draw reverent strangers to the vault, and which are always freshly crowned with garlands.

In comparing Goethe with Homer and Shakespeare, I mean to assert his equal and independent supremacy, without claiming for him precisely the qualities which made them great. In intellectual character, he is as far removed from either as each is from the other. Homer is specially epic, Shakespeare specially dramatic, and in Goethe we find the highest equal development of all the powers of the human mind. The word "many-sided," which the Germans apply to him, is not an adequate description. The general rule among men seems to be that achievement is the result of concentrated effort in one direction. Goethe reversed this rule; the broader his field of action became, the more splendid was his achievement. One cause of this phenomenon

will be found in a quality which formed the very basis of his nature. He was never satisfied until he had ascertained the positive reality of the subject of his thought, and its possible relations to other realities. His fancy and imagination were so healthy and so proportioned to his perceptive faculties, that their activity was only exercised upon a basis of real form or fact. Those vague yet splendid moods of the mind, in which some poets indulge, were never known to him—or, if he knew them, he never gave them expression. With the Swedish Tegnèr, he believed that

> "The obscurely uttered is the obscurely thought."

We find the same realistic element in other poets, but never in such perfect combination with the highest qualities of the imagination. Edgar Poe thus addresses Science—

> "true daughter of old Time thou art,
> Who changest all things with thy peering eyes!
> Why prey'st thou thus upon the Poet's heart,
> Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?"

and this is a sort of conventional sentiment with all minor poets. Even Schiller, at one period of his life, lamented—in exquisite verse, it is true—the dethronement of the Ideal by the Actual, in life. Goethe, however, would have smiled, and answered in terms like these: "Science is truth and Poetry is truth: both are infinite and inexhaustible: both are kindred fields

through which the human approaches the Divine Mind, and they can never be antagonistic in a healthy nature. Poetry is not an exotic plant, brought down to our life from some warmer region, and to be kept alive with artificial heat; it springs from and clothes all human life with color and sweetness, as grass and daisies cover the whole earth." Goethe could have analyzed the earth in which the rose is planted, and prepared a mathematical table of its ingredients; he could then have dissected the rose as a botanist, showing the metamorphoses by which the stem becomes the leaf and the leaf the blossom; and finally, letting Science rest, while Fancy arose, fresh for the task, he could embalm the beauty and sentiment of the rose in immortal verse.

I think this might be called one of the undeveloped qualities of Shakespeare. The point wherein the two poets touch is their power of assimilating all their acquired knowledge, and using it in the service of poetry. Neither is afraid of descending to the commonest and coarsest realism, yet either can soar as lightly as a lark into the highest and purest spiritual atmosphere. Both minds claimed the largest liberty, and used it as of right. They walked over the earth, as if bare-headed and bare-handed, taking the brand of the sun, the dust of the highway and the beating of the storm upon their brows—in the strongest contrast to those minds which always seem to go abroad in white

kid gloves and patent-leather boots, with an umbrella for the sun and a theoretical Mackintosh for the rain.

There is another sense which Shakespeare possessed by nature, and could only develop by such helps as were possible in his life; while Goethe, possessing it equally, was able, through his greater fortune, to bring it to the highest and noblest activity. I mean that element of proportion which was first discovered by the Greek mind; that adjustment of parts to the whole, of form to spirit, which we call the artistic sense. While Shakespeare was poaching, Goethe was reading Winckelmann and Lessing; while Shakespeare was speculating in wool, Goethe was studying the antique marbles in the halls of the Vatican: while Shakespeare was desiring "this man's art and that man's scope," Goethe could look abroad and say: "It is because none reach my art and my scope, that so few fully comprehend me." With such a vast variety of interests as he maintained throughout his whole life, many of his lighter works are faulty in construction, but nothing which matured properly in his mind is without its underlying law. Indeed, most of the fragments which he left have the roundness and the polish of pebbles of thought, smoothed by attrition in the strong current of his mind. This is not mere finish; it also includes fullness, as the veins in a pebble may suggest the strata in a quarry. Many of his detached utterances thus hint of a broad back-ground of thought. Take a single one as a speci-

men, though I must cripple its force by turning it into prose: "Timid wavering of nerveless thought, effeminate irresolution, anxious lamentation, turn away no misfortune from thee, cannot liberate thee. To hold one's self erect, defying all forces, never swaying, showing original strength, brings down the arms of the Gods in aid!"

Here is another: "Impatience is of no service: still less remorse. The latter increases the offense—the former creates new ones."

I have purposely compared Goethe with Shakespeare in these two particulars, because in the dramatic presentation of character he is inferior to that greatest of all masters. Shakespeare is universal in his apprehension of human nature: Goethe is universal in his range of intellectual capacities and in his culture. One is greater, the other is riper. Goethe lacks two elements of success as a dramatist—inventive genius and rapidity of movement. After "*Egmont*," which was an effort to overcome his natural deficiencies, but which cannot be called a complete success, he gave more attention to dramatic poems than to acting plays. He was an admirable critic, and his counsels helped to make Schiller's "*Wallenstein*" what it is; yet it is doubtful whether the material of "*Wallenstein*," in his own hands, would have been as satisfactorily modelled as by Schiller. I do not mean to undervalue the genius which he manifested in both "*Götz von Berlichingen*" and

"*Egmont.*" They are very important works; but they lack the equal power and completeness of such poems as "*Iphigenie auf Tauris*" or "*Hermann und Dorothea.*" He had dramatic genius; he had the power of illustrating by the force of contrast, and the power of presenting characters in their proper objective independence; yet it seems that there were differences of action in the combination of his many gifts. In other words, certain forms of activity were more free and natural to him than others. It would have been a miracle if this had not been so.

I have already alluded to Goethe's habit of using every form of his own personal experience of life, but only after the feeling which accompanied it had become a memory. He prefaces his lyrics with the couplet:

Spät erklingt, was früh erklang,	Early sounds that echo long:
Glück und Unglück wird Gesang.	Joy and sorrow turn to song.

and in his "*Trilogie der Leidenschaft*" (Trilogy of Passion), the most youthfully fervid poem ever written by a man more than seventy years old, are the lines:

Und wenn der Mensch in seiner Qual verstummt	While men their torment suffer, and are dumb,
Gab mir ein Gott zu sagen, was ich leide.	A God gave me to utter mine in song.

One consequence of this power is that all passion in his verse obeys the supreme law of proportion. The keenest emotions are expressed, but the author himself

is serene. Calm and self-poised, he paints every ecstasy or every pang: he does not attempt to revive the feeling, only to remember it. You cannot imagine his eye "rolling in a fine frenzy," as he writes—but rather the impartial eye of a spirit, surveying the past life of earth. Goethe has been called cold, unsympathetic, selfish, on account of this quality; and I must admit that, even up to the present day, a large class of persons are unable to consider it in any other light. There are a great many who hide their own tears, but expect the author to weep in public. Now, the objective treatment of one's own revelations of life, or of what is observed in the lives of others, is the highest achievement of literary art. Whatever of truth is thus presented, has a general, not an individual significance; and the truth that dwells in passion cannot be clearly seen while the air of poetry is thick with the very cloud and storm of passion itself. All strong emotion suspends the impartial activity of the intellect; and this is the reason why eloquence is so rarely impartial.

Although Goethe possessed this intellectual serenity, as we may call it, his finer faculties were no more under control than in the case of less gifted authors. He could not say to the Ariel of his imagination "Come!" and he came; but was obliged to wait the pleasure of the beautiful sprite. As his habit was to arrange the plan of a poem, in all its parts, before putting it into words, he was thus able to work upon any part of it,

according to his mood. After a certain amount of progress was made, the manuscript sheets were stitched together, the parts not yet written being filled out with blank paper of a different color; and as often as one of these sheets was removed and the manuscript inserted in its place, Goethe felt himself freshly encouraged to go on with the work. He was accustomed to say at such times: "I not only know, in my own mind, how much I have added, but it is now palpable to my external senses." There could not be a better illustration of his equal use of the Real and the Ideal.

It is not incumbent upon me, now, to enter into an examination of Goethe's occasional shortcomings. Everybody knows that Homer sometimes nods, and that Shakespeare sometimes rants; and the admission that Goethe has occasionally mistaken coarseness for satire, or gravity for wisdom, cannot effect his supreme place in literature. Had he not possessed a remarkable power of self-restraint, he would doubtless have sinned more frequently. His position at Weimar, for the first ten years, was more difficult than we can now guess: when it had been stubbornly acknowledged, he stood almost alone as an author until Schiller came to his side: during the excitement which followed the overthrow of Napoleon, he was denounced as an enemy of Germany; and, finally, the most absolute homage came to him from all quarters, giving to his old age a character of literary royalty which he enjoyed without dispute.

A lesser genius would have been affected by this perversity of circumstances; but he, "standing erect, defying all forces, never swaying, showing original strength, called down the arms of the gods to his aid." In him, character and intellect were not so closely united as in Lessing; his vital power overran into wayward impulses in his early years, and sometimes broke away from his control in later life: but we must judge a man, after all, as much by what he restrains himself from doing, as by what he does, and Goethe has as much right to the plea of *multum dilexit* as a less exalted intelligence. As a mental power, he was splendidly steadfast. He was as apt at detecting shams as Carlyle, but he pierced them without making any noise about it. So far as he assumes to teach directly, it is in exact consonance with the suggestions of all his highest works; he preaches independence, self-reliance, tolerance, mutual help, cheerful acceptance of every fortune, growth as a necessity of being, and knowledge as a necessity of growth.

In the poetic appreciation of Nature, Goethe has scarcely an equal among modern authors. The transfer to natural objects of the poet's sentiment—the reflection in them of his varying moods—the creation of a sentient spirit beneath the forms of the visible world—all this belongs to modern literature. In English literature it virtually originated with Cowper, was continued by Wordsworth, made popular by Byron and

Shelley, until now it has become the inevitable field which all young authors endeavor to tread. But Goethe was before Cowper and Wordsworth, far more subtle and intimate than the former, and wholly without the air of purpose which we cannot help feeling in many of Wordsworth's descriptive passages. Goethe presents Nature to us, not in a mere catalogue of forms, but with all the more elusive influences which come to us through light and odor, and atmosphere and perspective. If my space allowed me, I could give many instances of the delicate instinct which enables him to suggest a landscape in a single line, to give us the very soul of natural objects by phrases so simple that they startle while they charm.

I have not before referred to "*Faust*," because it was only finished with Goethe's life; the Second Part was first published after his death. Without studying both parts, no one can understand the author's plan. The First Part, alone, is a sublime dramatic fragment—the whole is a complete and wonderful poem. There is nothing in the literature of any country with which we can fairly compare it. There is no other poem, which, like this, was the work of a whole life, and which so deals with the profoundest problems of all life. It is so universally comprehensive that every reader finds in it reflections of his faith and philosophy. I have the essay of a French critic, who proves it to be a gospel of Pantheism: I have the work of a Catholic

professor, who is equally sure that it shows Goethe's reverence for the Church of Rome: I have the work of a Lutheran clergyman, who illustrates its Protestant orthodoxy by parallel texts from the Bible. These criticisms only show how completely it stands above all barriers of sect, all schools of thought, in that atmosphere of pure humanity where there is no dogma to darken God to the eyes of men. The passions and indulgences of youth only bring Faust remorse: place and power at the Emperor's Court fail to satisfy him: the perception of Beauty—which, after all, is only a recognition of the Divine harmony—first elevates and purifies his nature, and his happy moment comes at the end, as the result of an unwearied and beneficent activity for the sake of the human race, aided by the Divine love which is freely bestowed upon all men.

The poem embodies all the finest qualities of Goethe's mind,—his rich, ever-changing rhythm, his mastery over the elements of passion, his simple realism, his keen irony, his serene wisdom and his most sacred aspiration. The more it is studied, the wider and further it spreads its intellectual horizon, until it grows to be so far and dim that the physical and the spiritual spheres are blended together. Whoever studies "*Faust*," in connection with the works of the other German authors, cannot but admit that the critic is not wholly mistaken, who asserts that the single elements which, separately, made his compeers great, have combined to make one

man greatest;—that Klopstock's enrichment of the language, Lessing's boldness and clearness of vision, Wieland's grace, Herder's universality, and Schiller's glory of rhythm and rhetoric, are all united in the immortal work of Goethe!

You will allow me to close this incomplete sketch with some lines of my own:

Dear is the Minstrel, yet the Man is more;
But should I turn the pages of his brain,
The lighter muscle of my verse would strain
And break beneath his lore.
How charge with music powers so vast and free,
Save one be great as he?
Behold him, as ye jostle with the throng
Through narrow ways, that do your beings wrong,—
Self-chosen lanes, wherein ye press
In louder Storm and Stress,
Passing the lesser bounty by
Because the greater seems too high,
And that sublimest joy forego,
To seek, aspire, and know!
Behold in him, since our strong line began,
The first full-statured man!
Dear is the Minstrel, even to hearts of prose;
But he who sets all aspiration free,
Is dearer to humanity.
Still through our age the shadowy Leader goes;
Still whispers cheer, or waves his warning sign,—
The man who, most of men,
Heeded the parable from lips divine,
And made one talent ten!

XI.

GOETHE'S "FAUST."

THERE are a few poetic works which possess an immortal vitality—which so represent the actions and the characters of men, the problem of human nature, or the mysteries of human life, that their interest never grows old, their value never diminishes. The "Iliad" of Homer, Dante's "*Divina Commedia*," Shakespeare's "Hamlet" and "Othello," and Goethe's "*Faust*" belong to this class. Works like these were never produced simply through the voluntary action of the mind: they grew by an inevitable law, attracting to them the best creative intelligence of the poet, and, when completed, were greater than he himself could know; for he stood too near them to measure their proportions. The truth that is in them being of no time and no country, only touches the highest intelligences at first, and is then slowly transmitted to still wider and wider circles. Goethe's long and vigorous life enabled him to watch the impression which the First Part of "*Faust*" gradually produced upon the world; but the Second Part, only a small portion of which was published before his death, is not yet fully understood and valued as it should be, even by the most cultivated thinkers. Students of the German language are at this day dissuaded

from reading it on the ground that it is incomprehensible; and the completion of his sublime plan is charged against the author as the weak mistake of his old age!

As Goethe is the dominant figure in modern German literature, so "*Faust*" is the dominant work among his many creations. It is the one conception which began to fill and inspire him at the age of twenty-one, and remained with him until he sealed up the last pages of the manuscript, on his eighty-second birthday. Cherished thus for sixty-one years, his whole life forms the basis upon which it rests. Xavier Marmier, the distinguished French critic, says: "It was the chosen work of Goethe, the well-beloved child for which he delighted to gather the riches of science and the precious fruits of inspiration. It was the bright idea, the mistress of his youth, the companion of his mature age, who was accustomed to keep watch with him, to visit him in his dreams, to live beside him in solitude and society. He bore it tenderly, mysteriously in the depth of his heart, as a lover bears the secret of his first love. He did not reveal its growth, neither displayed its beauties nor caprices; happy in having created his Galatea, he took pleasure in seeing her move before his mind, in warming her upon his bosom, and each day giving her a new life by his artistic word, but he kept her for himself alone, and if other eyes peered too closely, he drew the curtain before his masterpiece. Sometimes he was sombre and thoughtful in the midst of society, for he was

thinking of Faust: sometimes a king came to see him, and he left royalty with pleasure, to return to Faust."

When we have learned Goethe's plan, we also perceive the great difficulties connected with its execution. We may regret that portions of the work were so long delayed, but we are very grateful that it was not allowed to remain a fragment. The Second Part is only obscure in some of its details: one clear and easily-traced design runs through it, and the close is a solution of that which is unsolved in the First Part. I shall therefore consider both as one connected work, which was Goethe's intention, although neither the publishers, the critics nor the translators pay much regard to it. I prefer to give a briefer review of the whole work rather than confine myself to the part which is most familiar, and thus only imperfectly explain its meaning.

The Legend of Dr. Faustus first took a form in the sixteenth century, while the belief in witchcraft and diabolical agencies was still prevalent among the people. The earliest edition of the story, upon which all later variations were based, appeared in 1587, and an English translation of it, published in 1590, furnished Marlow with the material for his tragedy, which was first acted in London, I believe, in 1593. There was an actual Dr. Faust, born in 1490, who studied at the University of Wittenberg, and is said to have been acquainted with Melanchthon. What special reasons there were for making him the hero of a story, cannot be

ascertained with any certainty; but the charge of a compact with evil spirits was frequently made against any man of more than usual knowledge. Even Luther believed in the constant activity of a personal and visible devil, whom he imagined he sometimes beheld.

The story varies in different versions, but it is substantially this: Dr. Faust having acquired all possible human knowledge, and being still unsatisfied, invoked Satan to grant him the further power he desired. The fiend appeared, and promised to serve him in all things for four and twenty years, on condition of receiving his soul at the end of that time. The compact was made, and signed by Faust with his blood. Then commenced for him a life of indulgence. In an hour or two he was transported to Italy, Egypt or Constantinople: gold, jewels and splendid banquets came at his call: gardens blossomed and trees bore fruit for him in winter, and no man had power to injure him. The Emperor Maximilian summoned him to Insbruck, and his magic arts were exhibited before the Court. He brought back Helen of Troy from the Grecian Hades, but was himself taken captive by her beauty, and forced Satan to reanimate her, in order that she might become his wife. After exhausting all forms of enjoyment, and exercising all powers which he desired, the term came to an end. Helen and her child vanished; a storm, with terrific thunder and lightning, came at midnight, and in the morning only a few fragments of Faust's body, torn and

mangled by infernal claws, were found in his chamber. He had a *Famulus*—a word used to signify servant and amanuensis—by name Christopher Wagner, who followed his example, made a compact with Satan, was served by an evil spirit in the shape of a monkey, and finally met the fate of his master.

The belief in witchcraft survived among the people long after law and theology had discarded it, and a dramatized version of Faust was one of the favorite plays given in puppet-theatres, at fairs, or other popular festivals. Goethe probably saw it thus acted, as a child, and when, after his return from Leipzig, he took up the study of alchemy, himself disgusted with the manner in which knowledge was then imparted, we can easily understand how the legend must have returned to his mind. The various texts of the old puppet-plays, which I have read, are by no means mere doggerel: they show a good deal of dramatic power, and suggest, to a lively imagination, much more than they express. Goethe was not the only one to whom the idea occurred, of making a graver use of the material. Lessing and Müller (called "the Painter Müller"), each wrote a tragedy of Faust, without being aware of Goethe's design; and one of Lessing's friends, writing about the lost manuscript after his death, says that Lessing's Faust was written at a time when in every quarter of Germany a "Faust" was either published or announced. In fact, during the sixty-one years when

Goethe was occupied with his work, upwards of twenty-nine dramas or poems on the subject of Faust, by other authors, were published in Germany. There must have been something in the intellectual atmosphere of the day—some general craving for power, some dissatisfaction with the conditions of life, which made the legend attractive. Goethe took it up, like so many others; but he alone saw the typical, universal element hidden in it—he, alone, was able to engraft his own life and the governing forces of all human life upon this wild shoot of a darker age. He began to write in 1773, after the subject had been maturing for two or three years in his brain, and by 1775 had written nearly one half of the First Part. It was composed very slowly, every line and couplet being carefully finished in his mind before being put upon paper. With his removal to Weimar, the work ceased, and the manuscript was yellow with age when he took it with him to Italy. Two scenes were added in Rome, and in the edition of his works, published in 1790, first appears: "*Faust, ein Fragment*," containing not quite two-thirds of the First Part. Stimulated and encouraged by Schiller, he resumed the work in 1797, and completed the whole of the First Part, and a considerable portion of the Second, which belonged to his plan from the start. In 1808, the First Part, as we now possess it, was published; but the Second Part, delayed by his scientific and Oriental studies, was suffered to wait until 1824,

by which time Goethe was seventy-five years old. The third Act, generally called *"Die Hellena,"* was published as a fragment in 1827, and the interest and the curiosity which it excited encouraged Goethe, in spite of his age, to work out the whole of his grand design. In August, 1831, the Second Part was finished, but it was not given to the world until after his death.

There is no doubt that the loss of Schiller, the battle of Jena, and the political convulsions which disturbed Germany for ten years thereafter, prevented him from undertaking the Second Part while its plan was fresh. and his faculties were in their prime of vigor. We cannot but feel that a great deal was lost by the delay; yet, on the other hand, we must admit that no other test could have so splendidly proved the youth and the vitality of his genius. Three predominant elements are united in the work, and, while they are generally blended together in harmony, we are sometimes obliged to consider them separately. First, there is that broad, all-comprehensive presentation of the life of man which, at some point or other, touches the experiences of all men—including, moreover, the problem of Good and Evil, simply stated and sublimely solved. Secondly, there is a reflection throughout, of Goethe's own life,—of the phases of passion and thought, through which he passed, of his own faith and doubt, his position in and towards the world. Lastly, there is, especially in the Second Part, matter introduced which has no direct con-

nection with the plan of the work, and interferes with its natural evolution. We can easily, in reading, set this last feature aside, and separate it from the main design wherever we detect it; but we must endeavor not to lose sight of the constant and intimate presence of the two former elements—of Goethe-nature and human nature. Notwithstanding the breadth, ripeness and impartial quality of Goethe's mind, we catch a fleeting glimpse, here and there, of his individual presence; or, it may be, that because all his life is so clearly known to us, we see the experience lying far behind the poetry, as we cannot do in Shakespeare.

Instead of giving you the "argument" of "*Faust*," in advance, let me rather commence at once with an examination of the poem, and unfold it as we proceed. The Dedication, written when Goethe was nearly fifty years old, breathes a subdued and tender spirit. In resuming his work, so long after its first inception, he recalls his friends and literary associates—Merck, Lenz, Lavater, his sister Cornelia—nearly all of whom had passed from the earth. It is a sweet and solemn prelude that he sings:

Sie hören nicht die folgenden Gesänge,
Die Seelen, denen ich die ersten sang;
Zerstoben ist das freundliche Gedränge,
Verklungen, ach! der erste Wiederklang.

They hear no longer these succeeding measures,
The souls, to whom my earliest songs I sang:
Dispersed the friendly troop, with all its pleasures,
And still, alas! the echoes first that rang!

Mein Lied ertönt der unbekannten Menge,
Ihr Beifall selbst macht meinem Herzen bang;
Und was sich sonst an meinem Lied erfreuet,
Wenn es noch lebt, irrt in der Welt zerstreuet.

I bring the unknown multitude my treasures;
Their very plaudits give my heart a pang,
And those beside, whose joy my Song so flattered,
If still they live, wide through the world are scattered.

Und mich ergreift ein längst entwöhntes Sehnen
Nach jenem stillen, ernsten Geisterreich;
Es schwebet nun in unbestimmten Tönen
Mein lispelnd Lied, der Æolsharfe gleich;
Ein Schauer fasst mich, Thräne folgt den Thränen,
Das strenge Herz, es fühlt sich mild und weich;
Was ich besitze, seh' ich wie im Weiten,
Und was verschwand, wird mir zu Wirklichkeiten.

And grasps me now a long-unwonted yearning
For that serene and solemn Spirit-Land:
My song, to faint Æolian murmurs turning,
Sways like a harp-string by the breezes fanned.
I thrill and tremble; tear on tear is burning,
And the stern heart is tenderly unmanned:
What I possess, I see far distant lying,
And what I lost, grows real and undying.

After this Dedication follows a "Prelude on the Stage" —a conversation between the Manager, the Poet and the Merry-Andrew, or Humorous person of the company. The Manager demands something that will please the public, who have read so much that they have become fastidious in their tastes; his preference would be a sort of literary hash, containing so many elements that each hearer will be certain to pick out something appropriate to himself, and all will go home pleased. The Merry-Andrew insists that there must be plenty of fun

and folly in the piece; while the Poet vainly protests against such a debasement of his art, and finally exclaims to the Manager: "Go, find yourself a more obedient slave!" The Merry-Andrew answers him with ridicule, and gives his idea of what the world should be, in the following words:

In bunten Bildern wenig Klarheit,	In motley pictures little light,
Viel Irrthum und ein Fünkchen Wahrheit,	Much error, and of truth a glimmering mite,
So wird der beste Trank gebraut,	Thus the best beverage is supplied,
Der alle Welt erquickt und auferbaut.	Whence all the world is cheered and edified.

The Manager then puts an end to the discussion by commanding that the work shall be commenced at once. He shows his sordid business nature, his utter ignorance of the poetic character, by saying:

Was hilft es, viel von Stimmung reden?	What need to talk of Inspiration?
Dem Zaudernden erscheint sie nie.	'Tis no companion of Delay.
Gebt ihr euch einmal für Poeten,	If Poetry be your vocation,
So kommandirt die Poesie.	Let Poetry your will obey!

He offers all the properties of his theatre—beasts, birds, sun, stars, fire and water, and closes the scene by declaring that if they are properly used,

So schreitet in dem engen Bretterhaus	Thus, in our booth's contracted sphere,
Den ganzen Kreis der Schöpfung aus	The circle of creation will appear,

Und wandelt, mit bedächt'ger Schnelle,	And move, as we deliberately impel,
Vom Himmel durch die Welt zur Hölle!	From Heaven, across the World, to Hell!

To this introduction succeeds a "Prologue in Heaven," imitated from the commencement of the Book of Job. The Prologue begins with a chant of the Archangels, which is so grand that I must quote it entire:

RAPHAEL.

Die Sonne tönt nach alter Weise	The sun-orb sings, in emulation,
In Brudersphären Wettgesang,	'Mid brother-spheres, his ancient round:
Und ihre vorgeschriebne Reise	His path predestined through Creation
Vollendet sie mit Donnergang.	He ends with step of thunder-sound.
Ihr Anblick giebt den Engeln Stärke,	The angels from his visage splendid
Wenn Keiner sie ergründen mag;	Draw power, whose measure none can say;
Die unbegreiflich hohen Werke	The lofty works, uncomprehended,
Sind herrlich, wie am ersten Tag.	Are bright as on the earliest day.

GABRIEL.

Und schnell und unbegreiflich schnelle	And swift, and swift beyond conceiving,
Dreht sich umher der Erde Pracht;	The splendor of the world goes round,
Es wechselt Paradieses-Helle	Day's Eden-brightness still relieving
Mit tiefer, schauervoller Nacht;	The awful night's intense profound:

Es schäumt das Meer in breiten Flüssen
Am tiefen Grund der Felsen auf,
Und Fels und Meer wird fortgerissen
In ewig schnellem Sphärenlauf.

The ocean-tides in foam are breaking,
Against the rocks' deep bases hurled,
And both, the spheric race partaking,
Eternal, swift, are onward whirled!

MICHAEL.

Und Stürme brausen um die Wette,
Vom Meer aufs Land, vom Land aufs Meer,
Und bilden wüthend eine Kette
Der tiefsten Wirkung rings umher.
Da flammt ein blitzendes Verheeren
Dem Pfade vor des Donnerschlags;
Doch deine Boten, Herr, verehren
Das sanfte Wandeln deines Tags.

And rival storms abroad are surging
From sea to land, from land to sea.
A chain of deepest action forging
Round all, in wrathful energy.
There flames a desolation, blazing
Before the Thunder's crashing way:
Yet, Lord, Thy messengers are praising
The gentle movement of Thy Day.

THE THREE.

Der Anblick giebt den Engeln Stärke,
Da Keiner dich ergründen mag,
Und alle deine hohen Werke
Sind herrlich, wie am ersten Tag.

Though still by them uncomprehended,
From these the angels draw their power,
And all Thy works, sublime and splendid,
Are bright as in Creation's hour.

Mephistopheles then steps forward, and in a brutal,

sneering speech, gives his opinion of the human race. The Lord asks him if he knows his servant, Faust. Thereupon Mephistopheles offers to bet that he will win Faust's soul if permission be granted. The Lord answers that he is free to try: that man errs as long as he strives and aspires; but He tells Mephistopheles, in advance, that in the end he will stand ashamed, to see that a good man, through all the obscurity of his natural impulses, still in his heart has an instinct of the one true way. Mephistopheles, however, accepts without the least fear that he shall fail. The words which Goethe puts into the mouth of the Lord intimate that Evil is a necessary part of the creative plan.

Des Menschen Thätigkeit kann allzuleicht erschlaffen,	Man's active nature, flagging, seeks too soon the level;
Er liebt sich bald die unbedingte Ruh;	Unqualified repose he learns to crave;
Drum geb' ich gern ihm den Gesellen zu,	Whence, willingly, the comrade him I gave,
Der reizt und wirkt und muss, als Teufel, schaffen.	Who works, excites, and must create, as Devil.

The "Prelude on the Stage" presents, in sharp satirical outlines, the relation of the poet to his own time. It shows that Goethe expected no popularity for his work—nay, no intelligent comprehension of its meaning. It must be read as a piece of defiant irony. The "Prologue in Heaven" indicates the grand ethical idea underlying the whole poem. Only the form is taken

from Job: the problem is stated in different terms, and worked out through an entirely new and original presentation of the life of man. But the manner in which Goethe has done this cannot possibly be understood without reading the Second Part.

We now reach the first scene of the tragedy. It is night, and Faust, in an old Gothic chamber, begins his soliloquy. He has studied Philosophy, Jurisprudence, Medicine and Theology, and finds himself no whit the wiser than before. His dreary conclusion is, that nothing can be known. Then, too, he has lacked in obtaining worldly fortune: he has neither lands nor gold, honor nor consideration among men. As a last experiment he has turned to Magic, hoping that he may detect the secret forces of nature, the undiscovered germs of all power, and rummage no more among empty words. A sense of the free delight of physical life, which he has so long given up for the sake of study, comes over him; he longs to leave his smoky den, his jars and skeletons, and live the life of the body in the open air. In this soliloquy we find not only the early experience of Goethe, but the early conflict between the physical and the intellectual natures of all men.

Faust contemplates the cabalistic sign of the Earth-Spirit, and then invokes its appearance. The Spirit is revealed in a ruddy flame, but Faust turns away his head, unable to endure the vision. The Spirit says:

In Lebensfluthen, im Thatensturm	In the tides of Life, in Action's storm,
Wall' ich auf und ab,	A fluctuant wave,
Webe hin und her!	A shuttle free,
Geburt und Grab,	Birth and the Grave,
Ein ewiges Meer,	An eternal sea,
Ein wechselnd Weben	A weaving, flowing
Ein glühend Leben,	Life, all-glowing;
So schaff' ich am sausenden Webstuhl der Zeit	Thus at Time's humming loom 'tis my hand prepares
Und wirke der Gottheit lebendiges Kleid.	The garment of Life which the Deity wears!

There is a profound meaning in the words with which the Spirit disappears:

Du gleichst dem Geist, den du begreifst,	Thou 'rt like the Spirit which thou comprehendest,
Nicht mir!	Not me!

Faust is now interrupted by the entrance of Wagner, his Famulus, who represents the ordinary, mechanical man, without a spark of original thought, and whom all the education in the world only turns into a shallow pedant. The German critics consider him as the type of a *Philister*—a term which they apply to the large class of half-stupid, commonplace, conventional individuals who enter largely into all society. Wagner's remarks only increase Faust's disgust and impatience. After the former's departure, Faust resumes the soliloquy, finds every view of life discouraging, every prospect of attaining satisfactory knowledge hopeless, and is gradually led from one morbid impulse to another, until

he settles on the thought of suicide. The conclusion of the scene is so remarkable that I must give it entire :

Nun komm herab, krystallne reine Schale !
Hevor aus deinem alten Futterale,
An die ich viele Jahre nicht gedacht !
Du glänztest bei der Väter Freudenfeste,
Erheitertest die ernsten Gäste,

Wenn einer dich dem andern zugebracht.
Der vielen Bilder künstlich reiche Pracht,
Des Trinker's Pflicht, sie reimweis zu erklären,
Auf Einen Zug die Höhlung auszuleeren,
Erinnert mich an manche Jugendnacht.
Ich werde jetzt dich keinem Nachbar reichen,
Ich werde meinen Witz an deiner Kunst nicht zeigen ;
Hier ist ein Saft, der eilig trunken macht.
Mit brauner Fluth erfüllt er deine Höhle.
Den ich bereitet, den ich wähle,

Der letzte Trunk sei nun, mit ganzer Seele,
Als festlich hoher Gruss, dem Morgen zugebracht.

And now come down, thou cup of crystal clearest,
Fresh from thine ancient cover thou appearest,
So many years forgotten to my thought !
Thou shon'st at old ancestral banquets cheery,
The solemn guests thou madest merry,

When one thy wassail to the other brought.
The rich and skilful figures o'er thee wrought,
The drinker's duty, rhyme-wise to explain them,
Or in one breath below the mark to drain them,
From many a night of youth my memory caught.
Now to a neighbor shall I pass thee never,
Nor on thy curious art to test my wit endeavor :
Here is a juice whence sleep is swiftly born.
It fills with browner flood thy crystal hollow ;
I chose, prepared it : thus I follow,—

With all my soul the final drink I swallow,
A solemn festal cup, a greeting to the morn !

[*He sets the goblet to his mouth.*]

(*Chime of bells and choral song.*)

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Christ ist erstanden !	Christ is arisen !
Freude dem Sterblichen,	Joy to the Mortal One,
Den die verderblichen,	Whom the unmerited,
Schleichenden, erblichen	Clinging, inherited
Mängel umwanden.	Needs did imprison.

FAUST.

Welch tiefes Summen, welch ein heller Ton	What hollow humming, what a sharp, clear stroke,
Zieht mit Gewalt das Glas von meinem Munde ?	Drives from my lip the goblet's, at their meeting ?
Verkündiget ihr dumpfen Glocken schon	Announce the booming bells already woke
Des Osterfestes erste Feierstunde ?	The first glad hour of Easter's festal greeting ?
Ihr Chöre, singt ihr schon den tröstlichen Gesang,	Ye choirs, have ye begun the sweet, consoling chant,
Der einst um Grabes Nacht von Engelslippen klang,	Which, through the night of Death, the angels ministrant
Gewissheit einem neuen Bunde ?	Sang, God's new Covenant repeating ?

CHORUS OF WOMEN.

Mit Spezereien	With spices and precious
Hatten wir ihn gepflegt,	Balm we arrayed him ;
Wir, seine Treuen,	Faithful and gracious,
Hatten ihn hingelegt ;	We tenderly laid him :
Tücher und Binden	Linen to bind him
Reinlich umwanden wir,	Cleanlily wound we :
Ach ! und wir finden	Ah ! when we would find him,
Christ nicht mehr hier.	Christ no more found we !

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Christ ist erstanden !	Christ is ascended !
Selig der Liebende,	Bliss hath invested him,—
Der die betrübende,	Woes that molested him,
Heilsam und übende	Trials that tested him,
Prüfung bestanden.	Gloriously ended !

FAUST.

Was sucht ihr, mächtig und gelind,
Ihr Himmelstöne, mich am Staube?
Klingt dort umher, wo weiche Menschen sind.
Die Botschaft hör' ich wohl, allein mir fehlt der Glaube;
Das Wunder ist des Glaubens liebstes Kind.
Zu jenen Sphären wag' ich nicht zu streben,
Woher die holde Nachricht tönt;

Und doch, an diesen Klang von Jugend auf gewöhnt,
Ruft er auch jetzt zurück mich in das Leben.
Sonst stürzte sich der Himmelsliebe Kuss
Auf mich herab in ernster Sabbathstille;
Da klang so ahnungsvoll des Glockentones Fülle,

Und ein Gebet war brünstiger Genuss;
Ein unbegreiflich holdes Sehnen

Trieb mich, durch Wald und Wiesen hinzugehen,
Und unter tausend heissen Thränen
Fühlt' ich mir eine Welt entstehn.
Diess Lied verkündete der Jugend muntre Spiele,
Der Frühlingsfeier freies Glück;

Why, here in dust, entice me with your spell,
Ye gentle, powerful sounds of Heaven?
Peal rather there, where tender natures dwell.
Your messages I hear, but faith has not been given;
The dearest child of Faith is Miracle.
I venture not to soar to yonder regions,
Whence the glad tidings hither float;

And yet, from childhood up familiar with the note,
To Life it now renews the old allegiance.
Once Heavenly Love sent down a burning kiss
Upon my brow, in Sabbath silence holy;
And, filled with mystic presage, chimed the church-bell slowly,

And prayer dissolved me in a fervent bliss.
A sweet, uncomprehended yearning

Drove forth my feet through woods and meadows free,
And while a thousand tears were burning,
I felt a world arise for me.

These chants, to youth and all its sports appealing,
Proclaimed the Spring's rejoicing holiday;

Erinnerung hält mich nun, mit kindlichem Gefühle,
Vom letzten, ernsten Schritt zurück.
O tönet fort, ihr süssen Himmelslieder!
Die Thräne quillt, die Erde hat mich wieder!

And Memory holds me now, with childish feeling,
Back from the last, the solemn way.
Sound on, ye hymns of Heaven, so sweet and mild!
My tears gush forth: the Earth takes back her child!

CHORUS OF DISCIPLES.

Hat der Begrabene
Schon sich nach oben,
Lebend Erhabene,
Herrlich erhoben;
Ist er in Werdelust
Schaffender Freude nah:,
Ach! an der Erde Brust,
Sind wir zum Leide da.
Liess er die Seinen
Schmachtend uns hier zurück,
Ach, wir beweinen,
Meister, dein Glück!

Has He, victoriously,
Burst from the vaulted
Grave, and all-gloriously
Now sits exalted?
Is He, in glow of birth,
Rapture creative near?
Ah! to the woe of earth
Still are we native here.
We, his aspiring
Followers, Him we miss;
Weeping, desiring,
Master, Thy bliss!

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Christ ist erstanden
Aus der Verwesung Schooss.
Reisset von Banden
Freudig euch los!
Thätig ihn preisenden,
Liebe beweisenden,
Brüderlich speisenden,
Predigend reisenden,
Wonne verheissenden
Euch ist der Meister nah,
Euch ist er da!

Christ is arisen,
Out of Corruption's womb:
Burst ye the prison,
Break from your gloom!
Praising and pleading him,
Lovingly needing him,
Brotherly feeding him,
Preaching and speeding him,
Blessing, succeeding Him,
Thus is the Master near,—
Thus is He here!

The second scene is before the city gate, on the Easter holiday. Citizens, students, servant girls, beggars and soldiers make their appearance. Each one

speaks in his or her character, and the result is a motley, animated picture of life. Faust passes through the crowd, feeling his desire renewed to be simply a man among men. Accompanied by Wagner, he walks onward to the crest of a neighboring hill, where the sight of sunset calls forth a passage so grand and impassioned, that it is hard for me to resist the temptation of quoting it. But I dare not pause too often by the way.

As the dusk begins to gather, they notice a black dog, running around them in circles, gradually drawing nearer. Wagner thinks it is only a stray poodle who is hunting his master, but Faust imagines that a trail of fire follows the animal. He returns to his quarters, taking the dog with him. The Third and the Fourth scenes are in Faust's study. He begins to translate the first chapter of John, while the dog lies on a cushion behind the stove. But he growls and barks fearfully, at each repetition of the text. Faust suspects the presence of an evil spirit in the beast, and proceeds to exorcise it by the usual formula of magic. The spell at last is dissolved, and Mephistopheles steps forth, in the costume of a traveling scholar. In answer to Faust's questions, he declares himself to be

> Part of that Power, not understood,
> Which always wills the Bad, and always works the Good;

and again, he says:

> I am the Spirit that Denies!

explaining that his proper element is Evil, in all its forms. This is the part which he plays throughout the whole poem. He is not Satan, but an intellectual Devil who works by always presenting the opposite of Good. He argues rather than directly tempts, and assures his power over Faust by trains of reasoning which the latter cannot answer, because they are the echoes of his own doubts. Mephistopheles is one of the most remarkable creations in literature. His cunning, his subtlety, his scorching ridicule and savage cynicism form a compound which is only a little more than human, and is not completely infernal. He is the echo of all the reckless and defiant unbelief of the whole human race: in him are concentrated their rebellious impulses, their indulgence, their negation of Virtue, Love and Faith, and herein lies the secret of his power. To look upon him as a conventional devil would lead you to misunderstand him entirely. Like the very qualities of human nature which he represents, he "always *wills* the Bad, and always *works* the Good,"—that is, in spite of himself.

Mephistopheles lulls Faust into slumber by the song of his attendant spirits—a wild, almost unearthly chant which hints at the delight of the senses, without expressing any intelligible thought. He returns next day, and so plays upon Faust's impatient, despairing mood, that the latter curses everything in which he had formerly believed, and at last—satisfied that all

forms of happiness have become impossible to him—exclaims:

Werd' ich beruhigt je mich auf ein Faulbett legen,	When on an idler's bed I stretch myself in quiet,
So sei es gleich um mich gethan!	There let, at once, my record end!
Kannst du mich schmeichelnd je belügen,	Canst thou with lying flattery rule me,
Dass ich mir selbst gefallen mag,	Until, self-pleased, myself I see,—
Kannst du mich mit Genuss betrügen:	Canst thou with rich enjoyment fool me,
Das sei für mich der letzte Tag!	Let that day be the last for me!
Die Wette biet' ich!	The bet I offer.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Top!	Done!

FAUST.

Und Schlag auf Schlag!	And heartily!
Werd 'ich zum Augenblicke sagen:	When thus I hail the Moment flying:
Verweile doch! du bist so schön!	"Ah, still delay—thou art so fair!"
Dann magst du mich in Fesseln schlagen,	Then bind me in thy bonds undying,
Dann will ich gern zu Grunde gehn!	My final ruin then declare!
Dann mag die Todtenglocke schallen,	Then let the death-bell chime the token,
Dann bist du deines Dienstes frei,	Then art thou from thy service free!
Die Uhr mag stehn, der Zeiger fallen,	The clock may stop, the hand be broken,
Es sei die Zeit für mich vorbei!	Then Time be finished unto me!

This is the compact: and I beg you to remember

the words which will give Mephistopheles power over Faust. He must experience a sense of happiness so pure and complete that he shall say to the passing moment: "Ah, still delay—thou art so fair!" Observe the nature of the problem: through perfect happiness he will lose his soul; yet how shall Mephistopheles evolve happiness from Evil? Either way there seems to be a paradox—a moral contradiction—and the solution of this riddle is the basis upon which both parts of the poem rests.

Faust exclaims, after the compact is made:

Stürzen wir uns in das Rauschen der Zeit,	Plunge we in Time's tumultuous dance,
Ins Rollen der Begebenheit!	In the rush and roll of Circumstance!
Da mag denn Schmerz und Genuss,	Then may delight and distress,
Gelingen und Verdruss	And worry and success,
Mit einander wechseln, wie es kann;	Alternately follow, as best they can:
Nur rastlos bethätigt sich der Mann.	Restless activity proves the man!

While Faust retires to prepare for his new life in the world, a student calls. Mephistopheles puts on Faust's cap and mantle, passes himself off for the learned Professor, and takes the opportunity to give his views upon logic, law, theology and medicine. His remarks are so shrewd and his satire so keen that the student is profoundly impressed, and at the close of the interview (like many another student nowadays) requests an

autograph in his album. This scene is a masterpiece of irony.

Goethe called the scene in the witches' kitchen a piece of "dramatic nonsense." Faust, looking in the witches' mirror, perceives the form of Margaret, which at once takes possession of his fancy. The witch gives him a magic potion to drink, which repairs the waste of his body in studies, and restores his youthful vigor. Then follow those simple, exquisite scenes in which Margaret is the heroine. Faust first sees her returning from confession, when she repulses his proffered escort. By the aid of Mephistopheles and an old neighbor named Martha, he obtains an interview in the garden, and soon succeeds in inspiring a return of his love. Margaret's perfect innocence and her simple trust in him awaken his sense of remorse. The latent good in his nature drives him from her, lest he should become the instrument of her ruin; but Mephistopheles, by painting her loneliness and yearning for the absent lover, brings him back again. Then follows the celebrated scene, wherein Faust gives his confession of faith, in answer to Margaret's doubts, and from this point the tragic portion of the story begins. Margaret's prayer to the Virgin is the passionate appeal of a loving and suffering heart. If ever tears were expressed in words, it is in those marvellous stanzas. It is remarkable that, although Margaret is a simple, ignorant girl, accustomed to hard work and no sentiment—although she is vain, and im-

prudent, and yields to her fate from the first, without making the least resistance, no imaginary woman in all literature—not even Imogen, Cordelia or Ophelia—excites so tender a sympathy in the reader. The conception of her character is not only original but daring. She is, simply, a woman, as innocent in her ignorance as Eve in Eden. Sin, crime and madness visit her, but we feel that she is their helpless victim, and that the original purity of her nature can take no permanent stain.

The tragical events thicken. Margaret's mother never awakes from a sleeping potion, administered without evil intent: her brother, Valentin, attacks Faust in the street, and is slain by him. Faust and Mephistopheles fly from the city, and she is left alone. She goes to the Cathedral, to seek solace in the religious services, but the Evil Spirit pursues her there.

Then follows the Carnival of the Witches, among the Hartz Mountains, on the Walpurgis-Night, which is the First of May. With the opening lines we begin to breathe a supernatural, almost a diabolical atmosphere. All is weird, strange and ghostly. Will-o'-the-wisps dance along the path; a tempest rushes down the gorges, tearing up the trees by the roots; showers of sparks fly through the air, and the red moon hangs low on the borders of the sky. The witch scenes in Macbeth are ghastly enough, but they have not the lurid, unearthly atmosphere of the Walpurgis-Night.

As we move along with the fitful dance or stormy sweep of the rhythm, we feel a creeping of the nerves, as if in the presence of powers brought from another and darker world. Mephistopheles here again reveals his true character, but he cannot persuade Faust to take part in the revels. Faust's thoughts are with Margaret, and he sees her at last, as a phantom, wherein her fate is revealed to him. It is difficult for me to refrain from quoting portions of the Walpurgis-Night; but I am forced to do it.

The *Intermezzo* (or interlude), called "Oberon and Titania's Golden Wedding," which follows, has really nothing to do with "*Faust.*" Goethe wrote it as a series of "*Xenien*," in another form, and sent it to Schiller for publication in "The Hours." Schiller, however, judged it best not to revive the excitement, which was beginning to subside, and returned it to Goethe, suggesting that he might use it in some other way: thus it came to be interpolated into "*Faust.*" It is a collection of very short, sharp stanzas, which snap and sting like a whip-lash, describing Goethe's literary enemies under names which allow the real persons to be guessed.

Returning to the tragedy, we next encounter Faust in a state bordering upon madness. He has learned that Margaret is imprisoned and condemned to death for infanticide. His remorse and passion are so frantically expressed, that Mephistopheles, Devil as he is,

begins to be frightened. He consents to carry Faust to Margaret's dungeon, and give his assistance in carrying her off.

One more scene concludes the First Part—the interview between Margaret and Faust in the dungeon. It is heart-rending in its tragic power. Margaret, rendered insane by her misery—and we are given to understand that the crime for which she is condemned was insanely committed—does not recognize her lover. She takes Faust to be the jailer, and pleads piteously for her life. At last she begins to remember, but dimly and incoherently: she takes no notice of Faust's agonizing efforts to persuade her to fly with him. I will quote the last half of the scene:

MARGARET.

Meine Mutter hab' ich umgebracht,	My mother have I put to death;
Mein Kind hab' ich ertränkt.	I've drowned the baby born to thee.
War es nicht dir und mir geschenkt?	Was it not given to thee and me?
Dir auch—Du bist's! ich glaub' es kaum.	Thee, too!—'Tis thou! It scarcely true doth seem—
Gieb deine Hand! Es ist kein Traum!	Give me thy hand! 'Tis not a dream!
Deine liebe Hand!—Ach, aber sie ist feucht!	Thy dear, dear hand!—But, ah, 'tis wet!
Wische sie ab! Wie mich däucht,	Why, wipe it off! Methinks that yet
Ist Blut dran.	There's blood thereon.
Ach Gott! Was hast du gethan!	Ah, God! what hast thou done?
Stecke den Degen ein,	Nay, sheathe thy sword at last!
Ich bitte dich drum!	Do not affray me!

FAUST.

Lass das Vergangne vergangen sein !	O, let the past be past !
Du bringst mich um.	Thy words will slay me !

MARGARET.

Nein, du musst übrig bleiben !	No, no ! Thou must outlive us.
Ich will dir die Gräber beschreiben,	Now I'll tell thee the graves to give us :
Für die musst du sorgen	Thou must begin to-morrow
Gleich morgen ;	The work of sorrow !
Der Mutter den besten Platz geben,	The best place give to my mother,
Meinen Bruder sogleich darneben,	Then close at her side my brother,
Mich ein wenig bei Seit' !	And me a little away,
Nur nicht gar zu weit !	But not too very far, I pray !
Und das Kleine mir an die rechte Brust.	And here, on my right breast, my baby lay.
Niemand wird sonst bei mir liegen !	Nobody else will lie beside me !—
Mich an deine Seite zu schmiegen,	Ah, within thine arms to hide me,
Das war ein süsses, ein holdes Glück !	That was a sweet and a gracious bliss.
Aber es will mir nicht mehr gelingen ;	But no more, no more can I attain it.
Mir ist's als müsst' ich mich zu dir zwingen,	I would force myself on thee and constrain it,
Als stiessest du mich von dir zurück ;	And it seems thou repellest my kiss :
Und doch bist du's und blickst so gut, so fromm.	And yet 'tis thou, so good, so kind to see !

FAUST.

Fühlst du, dass ich es bin, so komm' !	If thou feel'st it is I, then come with me !

MARGARET.

Dahinaus? — Out yonder?

FAUST.

Ins Freie. — To freedom.

MARGARET.

Ist das Grab drauss'? — If the grave is there,
Lauert der Tod, so komm'! — Death lying in wait, then come!
Von hier ins ewige Ruhebett' — From here to eternal rest:
Und weiter keinen Schritt;— — No further step—no, no!
Du gehst nun fort? O Heinrich, — Thou goest away! O Henry, if
könnt' ich mit! — I could go!

FAUST.

Du kannst! So wolle nur! Die Thür steht offen. — Thou canst! Just will it! Open stands the door.

MARGARET.

Ich darf nicht fort; für mich ist nichts zu hoffen. — I dare not go: there's no hope any more.
Was hilft es fliehn? Sie lauern doch mir auf. — Why should I fly? They'll still my steps waylay!
Es ist so elend, betteln zu müssen, — It is so wretched, forced to beg my living,
Und noch dazu mit bösem Gewissen! — And a bad conscience sharper misery giving!
Es ist so elend in der Fremde schweifen, — It is so wretched, to be strange, forsaken,
Und sie werden mich doch ergreifen! — And I'd still be followed and taken!

FAUST.

Ich bleibe bei dir. — I'll stay with thee.

MARGARET.

Geschwind! Geschwind! — Be quick! Be quick!
Rette dein armes Kind! — Save thy perishing child!

Fort! Immer den Weg
Am Bach hinauf,
Über den Steg,
In den Wald hinein
Links, wo die Planke steht,

Im Teich.
Fass' es nur gleich!
Es will sich heben,
Es zappelt noch!
Rette! Rette!

Away! Follow the ridge
Up by the brook,
Over the bridge,
Into the wood,
To the left, where the plank is placed

In the pool!
Seize it in haste!
'Tis trying to rise,
'Tis struggling still!
Save it! Save it!

FAUST.

Besinne dich doch!
Nur Einen Schritt, so bist du frei!

Recall thy wandering will!
One step, and thou art free at last!

MARGARET.

Wären wir nur den Berg vorbei!
Da sitzt meine Mutter auf einem Stein,
Es fasst mich kalt beim Schopfe!
Da sitzt meine Mutter auf einem Stein
Und wackelt mit dem Kopfe;
Sie winkt nicht, sie nickt nicht, der Kopf ist ihr schwer;
Sie schlief so lange, sie wacht nicht mehr.
Sie schlief, damit wir uns freuten.
Es waren glückliche Zeiten!

If the mountain we had only passed!
There sits my mother upon a stone,—
I feel an icy shiver!
There sits my mother upon a stone,
And her head is wagging ever.
She beckons, she nods not, her heavy head falls o'er;
She slept so long that she wakes no more.
She slept, while we were caressing:
Ah, those were the days of blessing!

FAUST.

Hilft hier kein Flehen, hilft kein Sagen;
So wag' ich's, dich hinweg zu tragen.

Here words and prayers are nothing worth;
I'll venture, then, to bear thee forth.

MARGARET.

Lass mich! Nein, ich leide keine Gewalt!	No—let me go! I'll suffer no force!
Fasse mich nicht so mörderisch an!	Grasp me not so murderously!
Sonst hab' ich dir ja Alles zu Lieb' gethan.	I've done, else, all things for the love of thee.

FAUST.

Der Tag graut! Liebchen! Liebchen!	The day dawns: Dearest! Dearest!

MARGARET.

Tag! Ja, es wird Tag! der letzte Tag dringt herein!	Day? Yes, the day comes,—the last day breaks for me!
Mein Hochzeittag sollt' es sein!	My wedding-day it was to be!
Sag' Niemand, dass du schon bei Gretchen warst.	Tell no one thou hast been with Margaret!
Weh meinem Kranze!	Woe for my garland! The chances
Es ist eben geschehn!	Are over—'tis all in vain!
Wir werden uns wiedersehn;	We shall meet once again,
Aber nicht beim Tanze.	But not at the dances!
Die Menge drängt sich, man hört sie nicht.	The crowd is thronging, no word is spoken:
Der Platz, die Gassen	The square below
Können sie nicht fassen.	And the streets overflow:
Die Glocke ruft, das Stäbchen bricht.	The death-bell tolls, the wand is broken.
Wie sie mich binden und packen!	I am seized, and bound, and delivered—
Zum Blutstuhl bin ich schon entrückt.	Shoved to the block—they give the sign!
Schon zuckt nach jedem Nacken	Now over each neck has quivered
Die Schärfe, die nach meinem zückt.	The blade that is quivering over mine.
Stumm liegt die Welt wie das Grab!	Dumb lies the world like the grave!

FAUST.

O wär' ich nie geboren !	O had I ne'er been born !

MEPHISTOPHELES (*appears outside*).

Auf ! oder ihr seid verloren.	Off ! or you're lost ere morn.
Unnützes Zagen ! Zaudern und Plaudern !	Useless talking, delaying and praying !
Meine Pferde schaudern,	My horses are neighing :
Der Morgen dämmert auf.	The morning twilight is near.

MARGARET.

Was steigt aus dem Boden herauf ?	What rises up from the threshold here ?
Der ! der ! Schick' ihn fort !	He ! he ! suffer him not !
Was will der an dem heiligen Ort ?	What does he want in this holy spot ?
Er will mich !	He seeks me !

FAUST.

Du sollst leben !	Thou shalt live.

MARGARET.

Gericht Gottes ! Dir hab' ich mich übergeben !	Judgment of God ! myself to thee I give.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to* FAUST).

Komm ! Komm ! Ich lasse dich mit ihr im Stich.	Come ! or I'll leave her in the lurch, and thee !

MARGARET.

Dein bin ich, Vater ! Rette mich !	Thine am I, Father ! rescue me !
Ihr Engel, ihr heiligen Schaaren,	Ye angels, holy cohorts, guard me,
Lagert euch umher, mich zu bewahren !	Camp around, and from evil ward me !
Heinrich ! Mir graut's vor dir.	Henry ! I shudder to think of thee.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Sie ist gerichtet! She is judged!

VOICE (*from above*).

Ist gerettet! She is saved!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to* FAUST).

Her zu mir! Hither to me!

(*He disappears with* FAUST.)

VOICE (*from within, dying away*).

Heinrich! Heinrich! Henry! Henry!

This is all of "*Faust*" that is known to most readers. But you will notice that the evolution of the great plan is only commenced: the riddle has not even approached its explanation. Of all the usual experiences of men, Faust has only been drawn to love, but love so interfused with conscience and remorse, that the happy moment has not yet blessed him. The compact with Mephistopheles still holds: he has not won his wager, although we may guess that he thinks so.

After the compact was made, he says to Faust, "We will first see the little and then the great world." By the "little world," he means the individual experience of the emotions and passions of human nature; and this is the reason why Faust was made young again by the magic draught in the witches' kitchen. By the "great world," he means the experience of a life mov-

ing on a broad field of activity, among men, and in stations where its influence will be felt by thousands, or millions, of the race. In this greater world, Mephistopheles has every opportunity to display his evil talent, and to annihilate the germs of good which baffle him in Faust's nature. The Second Part is therefore wholly different in its character. It is crowded with characters, and its events are displayed on a grand stage—so grand, indeed, that Goethe was forced to introduce the element of allegory, and make single persons typify whole classes of society. It requires a ripe and rather philosophical mind to appreciate this part properly, because Faust loses something of his strong human individuality by coming under the control of ideas instead of passions. He leaves behind him the experiences through which he touches the lives of all men, and rises to those wherein he touches only the lives of the men who think and aspire.

In the opening scene we find Faust sleeping, while Ariel, accompanied by Æolian harps, chants the progressive watches of the night, the restorative influences of Nature. This chant embodies an important feature of Goethe's creed, which he has expressed more fully in other works. He believed most devoutly in preserving moral and spiritual health. If there is a moral wound, it must be healed, leaving perhaps a scar behind it; but it must not be kept as an open sore. The chronic inflammation of remembrance and remorse must

be avoided. The true atonement for a wrong committed does not lie in nursing the pain it leaves, but in restoration to cheerfulness and courage and hope, for the sake of others.

Faust awakes to a scene of sunrise among the Alps, a piece of superb description. We learn that his nature is calmed and refreshed—that, forgetting his Past, he is ready to face Life again with fresh courage. In fact, he afterwards only once refers to anything in the First Part.

The next scene introduces us to the Court of the Emperor, who appears on his throne, surrounded by his ministers and lords. Mephistopheles has taken the place of Court Fool. The various ministers make reports, each more discouraging than the other. The treasury is empty; the realm is lawless and disorganized; the knights and burghers are at war, and the allies and tributary states are unfaithful. Money, however, is the great need, and Mephistopheles proposes to supply it by digging up all the treasure buried in the soil since the old Roman times. The proposition meets with favor, but the subject is postponed until after the Carnival, which is near at hand.

This Carnival is an allegorical masquerade, representing Society. The young of both sexes appear as flower-girls and gardeners. Intriguing mothers, with marriageable daughters; rude, offensive natures; social mountebanks, parasites, *roués;* the Graces, typifying

refinement; the Fates; the Furies, emblematic of slander and malice; Victory, mounted on an elephant, which is guided by Prudence, while Fear and Hope walk on either side; a chariot driven by a boy personifying Poetry, while Plutus sits within and Avarice hangs on behind—all these characters meet and mingle as they are found in the society of the world. The part of Plutus is taken by Faust, while Mephistopheles, true to his character of negation, wears the mask of Avarice. The Emperor himself appears as Pan, attended by Fauns, Satyrs, Nymphs and Gnomes. The form of the verse constantly varies in this scene; it is full of the richest and rarest rhythmical effects.

In the next scene the Emperor finds the aspect of affairs completely changed. The treasury is filled, the troops are paid, commerce flourishes, and the whole realm is prosperous. He learns that during the confusion of the Carnival, he has been persuaded to sign a document, which was really a decree for the issuing of paper money, redeemable in gold—after the buried Roman treasures shall be discovered and dug up. Some of the features of this scene are taken from the Mississippi scheme of John Law. Goethe's first intention was to deal with politics instead of finance, and we must regret that he afterwards changed his plan. Mephistopheles presents Faust to the Emperor as the originator of the paper-money, and the latter appoints him, with the Chancellor, to direct the finances of the

palm. In this scheme, we see the effort of Mephistopheles to initiate Faust into public life as the surest means to corrupt him; but we shall soon find that the evil nature has made a mistake.

The Emperor is so impressed by Faust's marvellous power that he desires a special exhibition of his art: he commands him to summon the shades of Paris and Helen to appear before his Court. You will remember that this was a part of the original Faust-legend, and was retained in some of the puppet plays. Faust calls Mephistopheles to his aid, but the latter hesitates to assist him. The task is difficult and dangerous: Faust must descend to the Mothers, holding in his hand a key which Mephistopheles gives him, and touch with it a tripod. The Mothers are vague existences, who dwell outside the bounds of Time and Space. The Court assembles, Faust rises with the tripod, Paris appears and then Helen. The members of the Court criticise their beauty in the true fashionable style, with impertinent praise or absurd censure. But we see that Faust is seized with a passionate adoration of the beauty of Helen, and we now begin to suspect that she is something more than a mere form. She represents, in fact, the abstract sense of Beauty, the informing spirit of all Art, the basis of the highest human culture. The honors heaped upon him by the Emperor, the hollow splendors of Court life, have only touched the surface of Faust's nature. This

vision of an Ideal of Beauty masters and draws him after it.

In the Second Act we are introduced to Faust's old chamber, and to his Famulus, Wagner, who has taken his place, and is trying, like the alchemists of the Middle Ages, to elaborate a human being, a Homunculus, by mixing together the chemical substances of which the body is composed. Mephistopheles, by a trick, makes the experiment successful, and the Homunculus guides him and Faust to the Pharsalian Fields, on the banks of the Peneios, in Thessaly. Here we have a classical, or Grecian Walpurgis-Night, in contrast to the Gothic one of the First Part. Faust has but one thought—to find Helen, while Mephistopheles wanders about among the forms of the earliest mythology, feeling rather uncomfortable, and a little uncertain what course to pursue.

The number of characters is very great. Griffins, Pygmies, Sphinxes, Syrens, Chiron the Centaur, Emmets, Dactyls, Lamiae, the Phorkyads, Thales, Anaxagoras, Nereus, Proteus, Nereids and Tritons, Telchines of Rhodes, and the sea-nymph Galatea, all take part in this wonderful moonlight spectacle. A great deal of the action has no connection with Faust. Thales and Anaxagoras are the representatives of the Neptunic and Plutonic theories in Geology, and Goethe, as a Neptunist, takes special pains to ridicule the opposite views. All this, however, must be set aside: then, by

carefully examining what is left, we find that it represents the gradual growth of the element of Beauty, in Art and Religion, from the first rude beginnings in Phoenicia and Egypt, until it culminates in the immortal symmetry of the Grecian mind. Since Goethe gives a moral, even a saving power to Beauty, his object is now not difficult to understand.

Faust, meanwhile, has gone to Hades, to implore Persephone to release Helen; but we are not informed how this is accomplished. As a specimen of the versification of the classical Walpurgis-Night, I will give the chorus of the Telchines of Rhodes:

Wir haben den Dreizack Neptunen geschmiedet,
Womit er die regesten Wellen begütet.
Entfaltet der Donnrer die Wolken, die vollen,
Entgegnet Neptunus dem gräulichen Rollen;
Und wie auch von oben es zackig erblitzt,
Wird Woge nach Woge von unten gespritzt;
Und was auch dazwischen in Aengsten gerungen,
Wird, lange geschleudert, vom Tiefsten verschlungen;
Wesshalb er uns heute den Scepter gereicht,—
Nun schweben wir festlich, beruhigt und leicht.

We've forged for old Neptune the trident that urges
To smoothness and peace the refractory surges.
When Jove tears the clouds of the tempest asunder,
'Tis Neptune encounters the roll of the thunder:
The lightnings above may incessantly glow,
But wave upon wave dashes up from below,
And all that, between them, the terrors o'erpower,
Long tossed and tormented, the Deep shall devour;
And thence he has lent us his sceptre to-day.—
Now float we contented, in festal array.

The Third Act is generally called "The Helena."

The scene opens in Sparta, whither Helen has just returned from Troy, in advance of Menelaus. In this act Mephistopheles appears as Phorkyas, a hideous old woman. Helen being Primitive Beauty, he, of course, is obliged to become Primitive Ugliness. I must compress the incidents of the act into a very brief space. Helen, flying from the vengeance of Menelaus, finds herself suddenly in the court-yard of a Gothic castle, the lord of which is Faust. He makes her queen of his domain, their nuptials are celebrated, and they become the parents of a son, Euphorion. In all this there is a double allegory. Helen is not only the ideal of the Beautiful, which rescues Faust from the excesses of passion and worldly ambition, but she also stands for the classical element in Literature and Art. Faust is not only the type of man, working his way upward by the development of his finer faculties, but he also stands for the romantic element in Literature and Art. This secondary meaning is added to the primary idea upon which the whole work is based. Euphorion, therefore, is the union of the classic and romantic spirits in one person. He is a perfect embodiment of Goethe's own poetry; but as Byron's death, at the time when this act was written, powerfully affected Goethe, he determined to make Euphorion a distinct representative of Byron. The act closes with the death of Euphorion and the disappearance of Helen, whose garments, left behind her, turn into clouds and bear Faust away. As a specimen

of the noblest literary art, the "Helena" is matchless: the more it is read and studied, the more its wonderful beauty grows upon the reader. The first half of it is written in pure Greek metres, the latter half in short rhymed stanzas that sound like the clash of cymbals. I will only quote from it the Dirge sung by the Chorus, on the death of Euphorion, because it is wholly descriptive of Byron:

Nicht allein!—wo du auch weilest,	Not alone! where'er thou bidest;
Denn wir glauben dich zu kennen;	For we know thee what thou art.
Ach! wenn du dem Tag enteilest,	Ah! if from the Day thou hidest,
Wird kein Herz von dir sich trennen.	Still to thee will cling each heart.
Wüssten wir doch kaum zu klagen,	Scarce we venture to lament thee,
Neidend singen wir dein Loos:	Singing, envious of thy fate;
Dir in klar und trüben Tagen	For in storm and sun were lent thee
Lied und Muth war schön und gross.	Song and courage, fair and great.
Ach! zum Erdenglück geboren,	Ah! for earthly fortune fashioned,
Hoher Ahnen, grosser Kraft,	Strength was thine, and proud descent;
Leider! früh dir selbst verloren,	Early erring, o'er-impassioned,
Jugendblüthe weggerafft;	Youth, alas! from thee was rent.
Scharfer Blick, die Welt zu schauen,	For the world thine eye was rarest,
Mitsinn jedem Herzensdrang,	All the heart to thee was known;
Liebesgluth der besten Frauen	Thine were loves of women fairest,
Und ein eigenster Gesang.	And a song thy very own.

Doch du ranntest unaufhaltsam	Yet thou rannest uncontrolledly
Frei ins willenlose Netz ;	In the net the fancies draw,
So entzweitest du gewaltsam	Thus thyself divorcing boldly
Dich mit Sitte, mit Gesetz ;	As from custom, so from law ;
Doch zuletzt das höchste Sinnen	Till the highest thought expended
Gab dem reinen Muth Gewicht,	Set at last thy courage free :
Wolltest Herrliches gewinnen,	Thou wouldst win achievement splendid,
Aber es gelang dir nicht.	But it was not given to thee.
Wem gelingt es?—Trübe Frage,	Unto whom, then? Question dreary,
Der das Schicksal sich vermummt,	Destiny will never heed ;
Wenn am unglückseligsten Tage	When in evil days and weary,
Blutend alles Volk verstummt.	Silently the people bleed.
Doch erfrischet neue Lieder,	But new songs shall still elate them :
Steht nicht länger tief gebeugt !	Bow no longer and deplore !
Denn der Boden zeugt sie wieder,	For the soil shall generate them,
Wie von je er sie gezeugt.	As it hath done heretofore.

The Fourth Act was written in Goethe's eighty-second year, and is the least important of all. Faust cannot live and find the satisfaction of his life in the service of the Beautiful, but its garments bear him above the stony ways of the Earth, and it is thenceforth his comfort and the consecration of his days. He now insists on a new field of activity: he means to compel Nature to the service of man. There is a part of the Emperor's realm which is uninhabitable, because at times inundated by the sea: this he will dike and drain, make fit

for population, and people with active colonists. Mephistopheles is bound to obey his commands, and the greater part of the act is taken up with the description of a battle which is won for the Emperor by his assistance. In return, Faust is presented with a title to the vast sea-swept marshes he desires to possess.

In the last act, the great work is accomplished. There is a fertile, populous province, intersected by navigable canals, in place of the sea. A harbor for commerce has been built, and near it, in the midst of gardens, stands the palace of Faust. Only two things remain to be done—to drain the last remnant of marsh, and to gain possession of a little cottage and chapel, near at hand, belonging to an old couple who refuse to sell or leave it. Faust has not yet found his perfectly happy moment, though he is now nearly one hundred years old. Mephistopheles, whom we may suppose to be very impatient by this time, endeavors to hasten matters by frightening the old couple to death and burning down the cottage and chapel. Faust curses the rash, inhuman deed, and Mephistopheles is once more baffled.

We now feel that the end approaches. The scene changes to midnight, before the palace of Faust. Four gray women enter: one is Want, another Guilt, the third Necessity and the fourth Care. The palace is barred against them—Want, Guilt and Necessity retire, but Care slips in through the key-hole. Faust defies her, but she breathes on his eyes, and he becomes blind.

But, in exchange for the external darkness, his spirit is filled with light: at last he sees clearly. He urges on the work with haste and energy: "one mind," he says, "suffices for a thousand hands." He gropes along, feeling his way out of the palace, and listens to the clattering of the spades, which, day and night, are employed in draining the last marsh. He feels that he has overcome the hostile forces of Nature, and created new homes for millions of the race. Filled with this grand consciousness, he exclaims:

Ja! diesem Sinne bin ich ganz ergeben,
Das ist der Weisheit letzter Schluss:
Nur der verdient sich Freiheit wie das Leben,
Der täglich sie erobern muss.

Und so verbringt, umrungen von Gefahr,
Hier Kindheit, Mann und Greis sein tüchtig Jahr.
Solch' ein Gewimmel möcht' ich sehn,
Auf freiem Grund mit freiem Volke stehn.
Zum Augenblicke dürft' ich sagen:
Verweile doch, du bist so schön!

Es kann die Spur von meinen Erdetagen
Nicht in Aeonen untergehn.—

Yes! to this thought I hold with firm persistence;
The last result of wisdom stamps it true:
He only earns his freedom and existence,
Who daily conquers them anew.

Thus here, by dangers girt, shall glide away
Of childhood, manhood, age, the vigorous day:
And such a throng I fain would see,—
Stand on free soil among a people free!
Then dared I hail the Moment fleeing:
"*Ah, still delay — thou art so fair!*"
The traces cannot, of mine earthly being,
In aeons perish, — they are there!—

Im Vorgefühl von solchem hohen Glück	In proud fore-feeling of such lofty bliss,
Geniess' ich jetzt den höchsten Augenblick	I now enjoy the highest Moment,—this!

He has said the words: the compact is at an end; and he sinks to the ground, dead. Mephistopheles has won, to all appearance. Standing beside the body, he calls up the hosts of Hell to surround him and take joint possession of the soul. But while he addresses them in a strain of blasphemous exultation, a glory of light falls from above. The angels appear, scattering celestial roses, and chanting:

Rosen, ihr blendenden,	Roses, ye glowing ones,
Balsam versendenden!	Balsam-bestowing ones!
Flatternde, schwebende,	Fluttering, quivering,
Heimlich belebende,	Sweetness delivering,
Zweigleinbeflügelte,	Branching unblightedly,
Knospenentsiegelte,	Budding delightedly,
Eilet zu blühn!	Bloom and be seen!
Frühling entspriesse,	Springtime declare him,
Purpur und Grün!	In purple and green!
Tragt Paradiese	Paradise bear him,
Dem Ruhenden hin.	The Sleeper serene!

The Devils are driven back by this shower of roses, which burn them worse than the infernal pitch and sulphur: the angels seize and bear aloft the immortal part of Faust, and Mephistopheles is left to gnash his teeth in impotent rage. The last scene is laid in some region of Heaven. After chants of ecstatic adoration by the souls of saints, the angels who bear the spirit

of Faust sing—and I beg you to mark the words carefully:

Gerettet ist das edle Glied	The noble Spirit now is free,
Der Geisterwelt vom Bösen:	And saved from evil scheming:
Wer immer strebend sich bemüht,	Whoe'er aspires unweariedly
Den können wir erlösen;	Is not beyond redeeming.
Und hat an ihm die Liebe gar	And if he feels the grace of Love
Von oben Theil genommen,	That from On High is given,
Begegnet ihm die selige Schaar	The Blessed Hosts, that wait above,
Mit herzlichem Willkommen.	Shall welcome him to Heaven!

These are the elements of Faust's salvation, and they at once recall to our mind the words of the Lord to Mephistopheles, in the Prologue in Heaven: "Thou shalt stand ashamed to see that a good man, through all the obscurity of his natural impulses, still in his heart has an instinct of the one true way."

After further chants by the angels, the Mater Gloriosa —the Virgin Mary, as the Protectress of Women—soars into space, and the soul of Margaret approaches. She is not yet allowed access to the highest heavenly regions, but the hour of her pardon and purification has come. I will quote from this point to the end:

(*The* MATER GLORIOSA *soars into the space.*)

CHORUS OF WOMEN PENITENTS.

Du schwebst zu Höhen	To heights thou'rt speeding
Der ewigen Reiche,	Of endless Eden:
Vernimm das Flehen,	Receive our pleading,
Du Ohnegleiche!	Transcendent Maiden,
Du Gnadenreiche!	With Mercy laden!

MAGNA PECCATRIX. (*St. Luke*, vii. 36.)

Bei der Liebe, die den Füssen	By the love before him kneeling,—
Deines gottverklärten Sohnes	Him, Thy Son, a godlike vision;
Thränen liess zum Balsam fliessen,	By the tears like balsam stealing,
Trotz des Pharisäer-Hohnes;	Spite of Pharisees' derision;
Beim Gefässe, das so reichlich	By the box, whose ointment precious
Tropfte Wohlgeruch hernieder;	Shed its spice and odors cheery;
Bei den Locken, die so weichlich	By the locks, whose softest meshes
Trockneten die heiligen Glieder—	Dried the holy feet and weary!—

MULIER SAMARITANA. (*St. John*, iv.)

Bei dem Bronn, zu dem schon weiland	By that well, the ancient station
Abram liess die Heerde führen;	Whither Abram's flocks were driven;
Bei dem Eimer, der dem Heiland	By the jar, whose restoration
Kühl die Lippe durft' berühren;	To the Saviour's lips was given;
Bei der reinen reichen Quelle,	By the fountain, pure and vernal,
Die nun dorther sich ergiesset,	Thence its present bounty spending,—
Ueberflüssig, ewig helle,	Overflowing, bright, eternal,
Rings durch alle Welten fliesset—	Watering the worlds unending!—

MARIA ÆGYPTIACA. (*Acta Sanctorum.*)

Bei dem hochgeweihten Orte,	By the place, where the Immortal
Wo den Herrn man niederliess;	Body of the Lord hath lain;
Bei dem Arm, der von der Pforte	By the arm, which, from the portal,
Warnend mich zurücke stiess;	Warning, thrust me back again;

Bei der vierzigjährigen Busse,
Der ich treu in Wüsten blieb;
Bei dem seligen Scheidegrusse,
Den im Sand ich niederschrieb—

By the forty years' repentance
In the lonely desert-land;
By the blissful farewell sentence
Which I wrote upon the sand!—

THE THREE.

Die du grossen Sünderinnen
Deine Nähe nicht verweigerst
Und ein büssendes Gewinnen
In die Ewigkeiten steigerst,
Gönn' auch dieser guten Seele,
Die sich einmal nur vergessen,
Die nicht ahnte, dass sie fehle,
Dein Verzeihen angemessen!

Thou Thy presence not deniest
Unto sinful women ever,—
Liftest them to win the highest
Gain of penitent endeavor,—
So, from this good soul withdraw not—
Who but once forgot transgressing,
Who her loving error saw not—
Pardon adequate, and blessing!

UNA PŒNITENTIUM

(*formerly named Margaret, stealing closer*).

Neige, neige,
Du Ohnegleiche,
Du Strahlenreiche,
Dein Antlitz gnädig meinem Glück!
Der früh Geliebte,
Nicht mehr Getrübte,
Er kommt zurück.

Incline, O Maiden,
With Mercy laden,
In light unfading,
Thy gracious countenance upon my bliss!
My loved, my lover,
His trials over
In yonder world, returns to me in this!

BLESSED BOYS

(*approaching in hovering circles*).

Er überwächst uns schon
An mächtigen Gliedern,
Wird treuer Pflege Lohn
Reichlich erwiedern.
Wir wurden früh entfernt
Von Lebechören;
Doch dieser hat gelernt,
Er wird uns lehren.

With mighty limbs he towers
Already above us;
He, for this love of ours,
Will richlier love us.
Early were we removed,
Ere Life could reach us;
Yet he hath learned and proved,
And he will teach us.

THE PENITENT

(*formerly named Margaret*).

Vom edlen Geisterchor umgeben,	The spirit-choir around him seeing,
Wird sich der Neue kaum gewahr,	New to himself, he scarce divines
Er ahnet kaum das frische Leben,	His heritage of new-born Being,
So gleicht er schon der heiligen Schaar.	When like the Holy Host he shines.
Sieh, wie er jedem Erdenbande	Behold, how he each band hath cloven,
Der alten Hülle sich entrafft,	The earthly life had round him thrown,
Und aus aetherischem Gewande	And through his garb, of ether woven,
Hervortritt erste Jugendkraft!	The early force of youth is shown!
Vergönne mir, ihn zu belehren!	Vouchsafe to me that I instruct him!
Noch blendet ihn der neue Tag.	Still dazzles him the Day's new glare.

MATER GLORIOSA.

Komm! hebe dich zu höhern Sphären!	Rise, thou, to higher spheres! Conduct him,
Wenn er dich ahnet, folgt er nach.	Who, feeling thee, shall follow there!

DOCTOR MARIANUS

(*prostrate, adoring*).

Blicket auf zum Retterblick,	Penitents, look up, elate,
Alle reuig Zarten,	Where she beams salvation;
Euch zu seligem Geschick	Gratefully to blessed fate
Dankend umzuarten!	Grow, in re-creation!
Werde jeder bessre Sinn	Be our souls, as they have been,
Dir zum Dienst erbötig;	Dedicate to Thee!
Jungfrau, Mutter, Königin,	Virgin Holy, Mother, Queen,
Göttin, bleibe gnädig!	Goddess, gracious be!

CHORUS MYSTICUS.

Alles Vergängliche	All things transitory
Ist nur ein Gleichniss;	But as symbols are sent:
Das Unzulängliche,	Earth's insufficiency
Hier wird's Ereigniss;	Here grows to Event:
Das Unbeschreibliche,	The Indescribable,
Hier ist es gethan;	Here it is done:
Das Ewig-Weibliche	The Woman-Soul leadeth us
Zieht uns hinan.	Upward and on!

To those who intend reading the whole work for themselves, I would add a few words in conclusion. In the characters of Faust and Mephistopheles are represented the continual strife between Good and Evil in Man. The first lesson is that man becomes morbid and miserable in seclusion, even though he devotes himself to the acquisition of knowledge. He must also know the life of the body in the open air, and the society of his fellow-men. He must feel in himself the passions and the impulses of the race: in other words, he must first become a man among men. He must fight, through his life, with the powers of selfishness, doubt, denial of all good, truth and beauty. Then, the error and the wrong which he may have committed must not clog his future development. He must recover health from moral as from physical disease. The passion for the Beautiful must elevate and purify him, saving him from all the meanness and the littleness which we find in Society and in all forms of public life. The restless impulse, which drives him forward, will

save him—that is, lead him constantly from one sphere of being to another that is higher and clearer—in spite of error, in spite of temptation, in spite even of vice. Only in constant activity and struggle can he redeem himself—only in working for the benefit of his fellow-beings can he taste perfect happiness. This is the golden current of wisdom which flows through "*Faust*" from beginning to end.

XII.

RICHTER.

Of all the representative authors of the great literary era of Germany, he who was known as "Jean Paul" during his life, but is now recovering his family name of Richter, is the most difficult to describe, both in regard to his relative place and the peculiarities of his genius. In the lives and the works of the other authors we find a greater or less accordance with intellectual laws; while he is phenomenal, almost to the point of being abnormal. They reflect the interests and the influences of their day, as in a clear mirror,—he as in one of those dark glass globes, which we sometimes see in gardens, distorting the reflected forms out of all their natural proportions. During his life, his circle of ardent admirers gave him the name of "*Der Einzige*"—the "only one," or "the unique,"—which may very well serve as a measure of his literary character, if not of his elevation. The first impression which a reader gets from his works is that he stands entirely alone, both with regard to other authors and to his own age; but a longer and more careful study shows that his relations to both have only been distorted by the unusual qualities of his mind.

There are intellectual genealogies in literature. Most authors may be shown to be, not the imitators, but the spiritual descendants of others, inheriting more or less of their natures. In this sense, the blood of Cowper shows itself in Wordsworth, of Gibbon in Macaulay, of Keats in Tennyson, or of Chaucer, after five hundred years, in William Morris. Among Richter's predecessors, his nearest intellectual ancestor was Laurence Sterne, the author of "Tristram Shandy" and the "Sentimental Journey,"—works which made a much deeper impression upon the literature of Germany than upon that of England. Take the main characteristics of these works—their airy, capricious humor, their unexpected touches of pathos, and their brief but marvellous glimpses of human nature: add all the sentiment of the Storm and Stress period, with the passionate fury and frenzy taken out of it; add, also, a prodigious amount of desultory knowledge; place this compound in the most willful and whimsical of human brains, and you will have a vague outline of Richter. The mixture is so unusual and heterogeneous that its elements cannot be separated by an ordinary critical analysis. Even the German critics, who are so fond of dissecting an author's mind, and showing you every hidden muscle and nerve which directs its motions, have found Richter an uncomfortable subject. He is a lively corpse, and will not hold still under their scalpels.

I have endeavored to indicate to you the special fields

of action of the great authors of whom I have already spoken,—to show how some strong interest or aspiration of the race found its expression in each; but Richter defies any such attempt to define his position. We can only collect all scattered interests, desires or sentiments which the others did not specially represent, and we shall be tolerably sure to find them somewhere in him.

In a single quality he is pre-eminent. Not one of his illustrious compeers approaches him as a humorist. Lessing possessed a keen and brilliant power of irony, but he is never purely humorous. Klopstock and Herder had no comprehension of humor, and Schiller but a very slight trace of it. Wieland shows most of the quality, and his "*Abderiten*" might almost be considered a humorous work, but it would be more correct to call it a lively and playful satire. Goethe's humor is always severe, and sometimes a little ponderous; in his comedies there is generally an element of grotesqueness and purposed absurdity. But in Richter humor is an irrepressible native force, breaking out in the midst of his tenderest sentiment, darting helter-skelter over all his pages, sometimes threatening, sometimes striking sharp and hard, provoking at one moment and delighting at another.

Some modern English and American writers assert that a genius for humor does not belong to the German people, and that its highest forms are not manifested in

their literature. I entirely disagree with this view. There are traces of a very genuine humor in Luther: Fischart overflows with it, and in the last century Lichtenberg will compare with any wit of Queen Anne's time. Although Professor of Mathematics and the Natural Sciences at Göttingen, Lichtenberg achieved for himself a distinct place in literature. My attention was first called to his works, some years ago, by Fritz Reuter, the *Platt-deutsche* humorist of our day. I think even our extravagant American idea of humor will appreciate his remark that "a donkey is simply a horse translated into Dutch;" or the manner in which he describes one of his pompous and pretentious contemporaries, by saying: "He sits down between his two little dogs, and calls himself Daniel in the lions' den." In fact, when he says that "a man who has stolen a hundred thousand dollars ought to be able to live honestly," we think we hear an American speak. He alone would prove the genuineness of German humor, if it were necessary to be done.

Richter's life was passed within narrow limits, and exhibits neither picturesque situations nor startling dramatic changes; yet it is none the less a story of deep interest. His grandfather was a Franconian clergyman, of whom he says that "he was equally poor and pious;" his father was even poorer, but with no increase of piety to compensate for it; and in 1763, at the little village of Wunsiedel, in the Franconian mountains,

he himself was born to a long inheritance of privation. The first twelve years of his life were spent in a village called Joditz, near the town of Hof, in northern Bavaria. The beauty of the scenery, with its contrasts of dark fir-clad hills, sloping fields and bright green meadows, awoke in him that susceptibility to all the forms and the phases of Nature, which is one of the charms of his works. His playmates were the children of the peasants, and through them he learned the life of the common people. His father, with a beggarly salary as clergyman, had a large family of children, who were both healthy and hungry, and he was barely able to feed, clothe and instruct them. During the long winter evenings the family burned pine-splints instead of candles.

As a boy, Richter attended school in Hof and in a neighboring town to which his father was transferred. He was an insatiable reader, borrowing books wherever he could discover any. It made little difference what the contents were: so they were books, he was satisfied. He furnished himself with paper, pen and ink, copied everything which made an impression on him as he read, and finally stitched the sheets together to form a book. He continued this habit for many years, and the result was a manuscript library, stuffed with the plunder of thousands of volumes. Everything was there—theology and tin-ware, art and artichokes, science, cookery, ideas of heaven, making of horseshoes, æsthetics, edible mushrooms, mythology, millinery—in short, a

tolerably complete cyclopædia, lacking only the alphabetical arrangement. When he could find no printed volumes to borrow, he read these manuscript collections over again, and a good part of the knowledge contained in them stuck to his memory.

During his seventeenth year his father died, and the family would probably have starved, except for a little help given now and then by the mother's relatives. In 1781, being eighteen years old, Richter went to the University of Leipzig, hoping to live by teaching while he studied theology. But the uncouth country-boy found no pupils. How he managed to live there for two years none of his biographers fully explain: the only thing certain is that he was forced to abscond to escape imprisonment for debt. Those two years, however, decided his vocation for life: he gave up theology, consecrated himself to literature, and published the first part of a work entitled "*Die Grönländischen Prozesse*" (The Greenland Lawsuits). Richter himself says, forty years later, that it was written in his eighteenth year, after daily association with Pope, Swift, Young and Erasmus; but the reader who is familiar with those authors will look in vain for the least echo of their style and manner—from beginning to end Richter's own grotesque individuality is as clearly marked as in any one of his later works. The title was well calculated to excite curiosity; hence the greater exasperation of the reader, when, instead of some strange Arctic story

or fragment of forgotten history, he found merely six Essays—"On Authors," "On Theologians," "On the vulgar Pride of Ancestry," "On Women and Dandies," and "On the Prohibition of Books." If, nevertheless, he attempted to read one of these Essays, he was confused, at the outset, by a style which at that time must have suggested insanity. The minds of some authors are like a lamp which illuminates the subject, more or less brilliantly, from one side: others walk around the subject, and light it carefully on all sides; but here was one which seemed to touch off a collection of fire-works, fizzing, snapping and popping in all directions, in the midst of which a part of the subject sometimes gleamed in blue fire, then another part in red fire, and then again a dozen rockets rushed off into the sky, leaving the subject in complete darkness. It is very evident to me that in addition to Pope, Swift and Erasmus, Richter had been attending lectures on physiology. The book is crammed with illustrations of the most extraordinary kind, drawn from that science. Two sentences from the first essay will suffice to give you an idea of its general character. In speaking of the literary pretenders and imitators of the time, he says: "In the dialogue of tragedy, the slang of the rabble is now wedded to the tone of the ode; the jests of beer-bibbers and the songs of seraphs embrace upon the same tongue, as jugglers draw wine and water from the same barrel. The saliva of poetry

makes the halting tongue of passion limber, and the poetic quill vaccinates the dumb woe with rhetorical pustules."

Of course the success of such a work was simply impossible. The reader, who expected either clear wisdom or intelligible wit, found himself face to face with a man who seemed to be grinning through a horse-collar. But, under all the contortions of a manner which perplexed, amused and offended at the same time, there lurked the genius of the man. A few, a very few personal friends began to believe in him. It must be said, in illustration of his integrity of character, that he never afterwards made the slightest attempt to render his style more acceptable to the public. It had to be acquired, almost like a new language, before he became popular. We have a similar instance in English Literature. When Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus" first appeared, as a serial in Frazer's Magazine, the publisher would have discontinued it, in despair, but for the letters of earnest appreciation received from two men, one of whom was Ralph Waldo Emerson. This was in 1835; and in 1870 the same work, in a cheap popular edition, reached a sale of 40,000 copies.

When Richter left Leipzig, as an absconding debtor and an unsuccessful author, he seemed to have reached the lowest depth of misfortune, and there was apparently no way of rising out of it. In fact, he stuck there for years, living with his widowed mother in the town of

Hof, in a state bordering on starvation. He was already a man, in the maturity and consistency of his character. Even his personal appearance gave rise to the bitterest prejudice against him. He cut off the queue, which all men carried at the time, wore his brown locks loose, without powder, flung away the thick cravat, which then reached from the collar-bone to the ears, and walked the streets with bare throat,—often without a hat.

This revolt against what was then not only respectability, but decency, shut him out from occupation which he might otherwise have obtained. There is nothing which the world is so slow to forgive as an independence in regard to personal appearance and habits. The greatest living English poet once assured me that there is not courage enough in all London to make a visit in a felt hat. Richter was one of the purest of men, yet for this independence he was branded as immoral; one of the most religious of natures, he was called an atheist. A clergyman in Hof possessed a work which Richter was very anxious to read, but the clergyman angrily refused to lend it, unless Richter would first wear a cravat and powder his hair!

After three years of painful struggle, a university friend finally procured Richter a situation as private tutor in his father's family, and thus for three years longer the suffering man was at least fed and clothed. Then he established a school of his own in a little town near Hof, and labored as a gentle, if an unwilling,

pedagogue for four years. This brings us to the year 1794, the beginning of his literary success, the first hope of which led him to give up the school and return to his mother, whom he tenderly cherished until her death in 1797. He then left Hof forever, and went to Leipzig and Berlin.

This period of Richter's life embraces ten years of painful and discouraging struggles, and four years of partial success. A knowledge of it is of the greatest importance in estimating both his personal character and his intellectual development. The name of Hof suggests to me an illustration of the ignorance which a man may manifest, and yet be renowned as a scholar. Prosper Merimée is considered the first German scholar of his time in France, yet he never took the trouble to inform himself that Hof is a Bavarian town. He supposes it to mean the Court of some reigning prince, and, in spite of the absurdity and the contradictions which ensue, he continually says of Richter, while he and his mother were starving together: "*Comme il était à la Cour!*"

Richter meant to continue his "Greenland Lawsuits," but no publisher would even look at them. He waited five years, and in 1788 published a work entitled "*Auswahl aus des Teufels Papieren*" (Selections from the Papers of the Devil), a collection of essays, full of keen and grotesque satire, but neither attractive nor very profitable reading. His long struggle with

poverty and with the narrow, unjust prejudices of the community in which he lived, gave a sharp and bitter tone to his mind which delayed his literary success, and thus repeated his misfortune in a new form. But a change was now near at hand, and, singularly enough, it came through a moral rather than an intellectual development. He was one day so assailed and ridiculed by some of his narrow-minded neighbors, that the strongest feeling of resentment was aroused. While he was trying to call up words severe enough to express it, his eye fell upon some boys who were playing near. He saw suddenly, as in a vision, the troubles and the sorrows which would leave their marks on those bright, happy faces; he felt the pangs which the most fortunate life cannot escape: all that men suffer crowded upon his mind, softened his heart, and he turned away in silence from his persecutors. The same day he wrote in his journal: "Henceforth I will assert my rights as firmly as ever, but always with gentleness."

His next work, finished in 1791, marks this new departure. It is called: "*Das Leben des vergnügten Schulmeisterleins Wuz*" (The Life of the Cheerful Little Schoolmaster Wuz). Here he forsakes the essay, and attempts what might be called a romance if it had either a plot or a consistent narrative. The characters, as in all his later works, are sometimes wonderfully minute and realistic studies from actual life, and sometimes merely mouth-pieces for the expression of the

author's own humor and fancy. Many of the scenes are evidently pictures of his own personal experience, very minutely sketched, but at the same time so delicately and sportively that they never weary the reader.

Richter felt that he had at last discovered the true field for his willful genius. His few friends gave him hearty encouragement, and it only remained to win back the public which he had repelled. His next work, "*Die unsichtbare Loge*" (The Invisible Lodge), was the turning-point in his fortunes. It was finished in the summer of 1792, and sent, with an anonymous letter, to an author named Moritz, in Berlin, begging him to read it and, if possible, to find a publisher for it. Moritz groaned when he saw the package, and left the letter unopened for several days. When he finally broke the seal and read the first sentences, he cried out: "This must be from Goethe!" He then began to read the manuscript aloud to some friends, and very soon exclaimed: "This is new and wonderful: this is more than Goethe!" To Richter he wrote: "Who are you? What are you? The man who has written these works is immortal!" A package of a hundred ducats accompanied the letter; and Richter, reeling and staggering like a drunken man, from a joy so intense as to be incredible, hastened home to pour them in a golden stream into the lap of his mother.

If the enthusiasm of Moritz did not communicate itself to a very large circle of readers, still an audience

was secured; and Richter's next work: "*Hesperus oder fünfundvierzig Hundsposttage*" (Hesperus, or Forty-five Dog-Post Days), which appeared two years afterwards, brought him to the knowledge of all the authors and the critics of Germany. A place was made for him in literature, and a party was recruited for him out of the ranks of the reading public. Herder hailed him as a friend and an ally: the sentiment of the Storm and Stress period, so long deprived of the luxury of weeping, blessed him through the fresh tears which fell upon his pages; and a short time sufficed to transform the ridiculous, despised, unpowdered, bare-throated schoolmaster of Hof into a sort of pastoral and idyllic demi-god, whom princesses sought as a guest.

Apart from the new and exceptional genius which he brought into literature, there were several reasons for Richter's sudden popularity. The increasing excellence of Goethe and Schiller, in form and proportion, was carrying them beyond the sympathies of that large class who demand feeling and warmth and a certain *abandon* in their favorite authors: the new romantic school, headed by Tieck and the Schlegels, was not yet sufficiently developed to supply the public need; and jealousy of the Weimar circle, in other parts of Germany, operated to the advantage of any new author who promised to be a rival. Richter kept the place which he had made for himself. His later works all retain the character of his earlier ones. Except as they were en-

riched from his experience or his acquired knowledge, they show few traces of development. In this respect there could be no stronger contrast than he presents to Schiller. The only literary endeavor which we can trace in his works is that of exaggerating or multiplying the eccentricities of his style.

In 1796, Richter visited Jena and Weimar, and made the personal acquaintance of all the great authors. He first met Herder, walking in the park. Rushing up to him, he cried out: "Art thou *he?*" "I am," said Herder, "and thou art he!" Whereupon they fell into each other's arms. Richter was drawn into a circle which was very hostile to Goethe, and although the latter treated him with great kindness, he took no pains to secure Goethe's friendship. He seems also to have entirely misunderstood Schiller's nature: in fact, his head was a little turned by the praises showered upon him by persons more demonstrative than the two authors: he seems to have expected kisses, embraces and tears, at the first meeting, and calls Goethe frozen and Schiller stony, because they only shook hands and invited him to dinner. In his letters to Herder and Knebel, he expressed these crude impressions, and they were soon repeated in the gossip of Weimar. The result was Richter's complete estrangement from the two men who most might have helped him onward and upward, even as they helped each other. Their correspondence shows that they were both profoundly

interested in him, and inclined towards a friendly association.

After his mother's death, Richter lived a year in Leipzig, a second in Weimar, and then two years in Berlin, where, in 1801, he married Caroline Meyer, the daughter of a government official. He first selected Meiningen as a residence, but, in 1805, settled permanently in the town of Bayreuth, Franconia. Three years later, the Prince-Primate, Dalberg, the only ecclesiastical ruler whom Napoleon did not suppress in Germany, gave him a pension of one thousand florins (four hundred dollars) annually, which was continued to him, after the liberation of Germany, by the King of Bavaria. The remainder of his life was peaceful and uneventful. He fell into a regular habit of authorship, and not a single year passed without one or more new works from his pen. In order to avoid interruption, he hired a room in a little tavern on a hill, two or three miles from Bayreuth. Some years ago I visited the place, and found a garret chamber with one window, two chairs, some shelves, upon which Richter kept his manuscript cyclopædia, and a writing-desk, in the drawer of which lay an unpublished manuscript in his own handwriting, entitled: "Some Observations upon us Fools." Some old persons whom I met there described to me the author, as they had seen him walking out from the town every morning and back every evening, with bare throat, a bottle of wine in each side-

pocket, and a white poodle-dog at his heels. One man added: "I was at his funeral, and he was the most beautiful corpse I ever saw." He died at the close of the year 1825, not quite sixty-three years old.

The other works of Richter which are best known, are "*Titan*," which is generally considered his greatest; "*Blumen- Frucht- und Dornenstücke, oder Ehestand, Tod und Hochzeit des Armenadvokaten Siebenkäs*" (Flower, Fruit and Thorn Pieces, or Married Life, Death and Wedding of the Lawyer of the Poor, Siebenkäs); "*Das Kampanerthal;*" "*Flegeljahre;*" "*Levana oder Erziehungslehre*" (a Theory of Education); "*Dr. Katzenberger's Badereise*" (Journey to a Watering-Place), and "*Vorschule der Aesthetik*" (Introduction to Æsthetics). Except the last, all these works must be called romances, in the absence of any better term. He published also a number of smaller humorous essays, the most of which are now but little read, except by his special admirers. The complete edition of his works, published after his death, comprises sixty small volumes. It is very evident that it finally became something of a task to him to invent new eccentricities in his manner of treating a subject, and he sometimes carries the grotesque to the verge of idiocy. In "*Hesperus*" the chapters are called "Dog-Post Days," because a dog is supposed to bring them to the author, one by one, in a bottle fastened to his neck: in "*Titan*"

there are no chapters, but "*Jobelperioden*," subdivided into "*Zykel;*" in the "*Flegeljahre*" the chapters have the names of minerals—mica-slate, feldspar, hornblende —and in the "Invisible Lodge" they are called "*Sectors.*" Moreover, there is no regular succession of these sectors, cycles or minerals: they are continually interrupted, and the progress of the story—what there is of it—is delayed by "extra sheets," "postscripts," "pastoral letters," "addenda," "intercalary days," "circulars," etc. In one of the works the story stops suddenly, and then appears a long letter to the publisher, stating that the writer is the author's sister, that her brother has been bitten by a dog, fears that he may have hydrophobia, and must suspend his labors! Many of the titles also have no relation whatever to the contents: he calls an essay of a somewhat critical and biographical nature, "Observations made under the skull of a giantess." In short, there are no bounds to the willful, whimsical pranks of his mind. The reader is led by glimpses of a delicate Ariel into swamps and briers, over stone heaps, and is sometimes left alone, in the middle of a labyrinth, to find the outlet as best he may. If he delights in quaint fancy, tender sentiment, pure human sympathy, exquisite pictures of nature, and a power of suggestiveness which keeps his own mind constantly at work, he will bear with the tricksome sprite and follow. But few persons, I suspect, could endure the caprice and the arrogance of Richter's style,

were it not for the strength and the sweetness of his moral nature.

His works are somewhat difficult to read, even to Germans, not so much from the obscurity of his thought as its utter want of form. He often tells you that he has a certain thing to say, and then makes the tour of the world before he says it. The reader finds himself in the condition of a patient waiting for the medicine which a friend has gone to buy, but who, on the way, drops in at the baker's, and the blacksmith's shop, hospital, picture-gallery, prison, hears a prayer in the church, takes a dancing-lesson, has his hair cut, and looks into twenty volumes at a second-hand book-stall. After all this, the friend brings the medicine, and he is so kind and sympathetic, he looks into your eyes with such love, his voice is so soothing, that your vexation dies instantly, and in ten minutes you let him go out again on another errand of the same kind.

To acquire a knowledge of Richter with the least difficulty, one should take one of his works along as a traveling-companion on a railway. He may then be read gradually, with many interruptions, with pauses to pursue a little way the fresh tracks of thought he is continually suggesting, and with glimpses of landscape which harmonize with his pages. We cannot feel much interest in his characters, for they are too shadowy, except when they are drawn from humble life and from actual persons. When Richter describes the narrow

circumstances of the poor, their customary joys and sorrows, their struggles or perplexities of heart or mind, he is wholly admirable; but when he rises to that class which possesses the ideally impressible element, he often makes us laugh now where his first readers were deeply moved. His lofty heroes and heroines weep whenever they see anything beautiful; they embrace and kiss whenever they agree in sentiment; the sight of a sunset from the top of a tower gives them thoughts of suicide, and they never look up to the stars without sighing to be disembodied spirits. They gush with an emotion which is never exhausted: they feed on hopes and longings, and are never happy except when they are inexpressibly sad. Yet, fools as they are, we cannot help loving them. If they could visit us, for only half an hour, on a moonlight night of summer, when the woodbines are in blossom, we should be delighted with their company; but Heaven forbid that they should come to us in the day-time, and especially in the market-place!

I speak of Richter's extravagant sentiment, not only because it is one of his prominent characteristics, but also because it immediately presents itself to those who open almost any one of his romances for the first time. "*Siebenkäs*" is the least objectionable in this respect. The characters of the poor, dreaming, unpractical poet of a lawyer and of his exasperatingly matter-of-fact wife, who, in the midst of his eloquent harangue on Eter-

nity, interrupts him by saying: "Don't forget to leave off your left stocking to-morrow morning: there is a hole in it!"—are the author himself and his good old mother. Memory, in this work, acts as a good genius, constantly calling back his fancy from its wanderings; but in "*Titan*" and "*Hesperus*" there is no such restraint. The characters in these works float over the earth, and only now and then touch it with the tips of their toes. After waving their arms towards heaven, and gazing through tears on the Milky Way, for many pages, they sometimes come down a little, and we hope that they will soberly walk beside us for a few paces; but no! the contact of the stable reality sends them off with a *ricochet*, and the forms that seemed human become indistinct masses of electric light and angels' feathers in the distance. Contrasted with Goethe and Schiller, or indeed with any of his contemporaries, we at once perceive Richter's prominent fault: he has not the slightest sense of form in literature. That patient thought, by which a conception is slowly wrought into consistent and proportioned being, was utterly unknown to him. Instead of complete structures, where the idea sits enthroned like a god in his temple, he gives us piles of materials, fragments of columns and altars, stones carved with fair faces of women and cherubs, with grinning masks, or with wild tangles of arabesque designs. In fact, he strongly suggests the Gothic ornamentation of the Middle Ages, with its mixture of roses

and thistles, its leaves running into heads, its bodies tapering into quaint mathematical designs, and its singular blending of meaning and willful sport. We see the same tendency, to indulge in the purely fantastic, in Albert Dürer and other early German painters. It is an element compounded of genius, egotism, vanity and fancy; for the author insists on giving us the play and not the labor of his mind,—the detached suggestions and sketches, instead of the perfect picture. If this were Richter's only characteristic, he would be an exact embodiment of the undeveloped German mind. Intellect, in a crude, formless state of nature, is always willful and arrogant. Hence, the worship of form, as an ideal to be attained, purifies the author's conception from his merely personal whims and moods, and thrusts his egotism and vanity into the background, while forcing his fancy to serve as the law of beauty dictates. Richter might have learned something of this, to his endless advantage, had he allied himself with Goethe and Schiller, and borne with their honest criticism, instead of giving himself up wholly to the luxury of being praised, embraced and wept over. In their correspondence the two poets called him a *tragelaph*, or Indian antelope, but there was no offence in applying this term to the gambols of such a free and nimble intellect.

Richter's social success had also its share in misleading him. His independence and defiance of persecution, during these long years of bitter poverty, had

given him an air of pride and dignity; he had a strong and finely-formed body and a superb head, with a brow like Jupiter's, and the frank eyes and mouth of a boy; and thus, at the age of thirty-three, he burst upon the world, which first knew him nearly at the level of his highest performance. He was a welcome phenomenon at the courts of princes, *blasés* with all their ordinary associations. Here was a veritable child of nature, who yet observed the laws of society. The aristocratic circles were charmed by his originality, brilliancy and gentleness, while they dreaded to provoke his powers of humor and satire; so he was allowed to say things which startled the courtiers, he was petted and caressed, and at length innocently led to believe that the more freely he poured forth all the ingredients of his nature, without regard to their arrangement, the more he would gratify the world. His literary development therefore ceased, as I have already said. His pen became a permanent escape-pipe or drain for his mind, carrying off every thought as it welled up. Moreover, humor being the distinctive quality of his genius, he could scarcely have risen to a higher plane without losing something of it on the way. Humor is a quality which may be wisely governed, refined by study and exercise, but it rigidly holds the mind to its own special sphere of thought and invention. It may slyly peep into the cloisters of earnest thought, but it keeps far away from the altars of aspiration.

Richter is frequently called a poet in prose, but the title is hardly correct. I will admit that he possessed a thoroughly poetic appreciation of nature, and that a few of his scattered conceptions are adapted to poetic treatment, but I have rarely found an author with so little of the poetic faculty. His idea of prose, for the most part, seems to consist in tearing up sentences, and then putting the fragments together at random. Passages of great tenderness and eloquence are frequent, but they are seldom rhythmical. He sometimes refers to poets, but never quotes a line from them, except from the classic authors. A sweet pervading sentiment is often mistaken for poetry, but it is the difference between a ton of marble-dust and a statue.

I have indicated Richter's chief deficiencies, and I now turn to his equally evident merits. His humor can hardly be illustrated by detached passages from his works, because it is so evenly woven into their entire textures. It is full of grotesque surprises, always whimsical, often absurd, but it is never coarse or cruel. I have twice or thrice found men—not authors—who showed a very similar quality in conversation, where it is always delightful. In Richter's case, the irresistible tendency to use all the knowledge crammed into his written cyclopædia, is a hindrance to its lightest and freest exercise. One is sometimes reminded of a peasant-character, in a story by Auerbach, who always danced with three or four heavy iron wedges in his coat-

pockets, to keep the other dancers from crowding him. Often, however, his anatomical, chemical or theological figures of speech are as clear and keen as flashes of lightning. Then through the humor we see the features of some profound truth, and say to the author, "Be as grotesque as you please, so you give us more of this!"

A careful study of Richter reveals the element wherein he most reflects the feeling of his time, and which accounts for his great popularity. He represents the struggle between a real state of things, which was nearly intolerable to a large class of Germans, and the dream of something better, sweeter and more harmonious in their lives. The more they felt the one, the more intense became the other. Socially and politically the country was already disorganized, while the living aspirations of the people were forced to accommodate themselves to the old, dead forms. There was, and could be, no improvement until after a long season of bitter experience. Subjection to France, war, the mockery of the Holy Alliance, and revolution—fifty years of struggle—have brought about the transition; and we can now hardly realize to ourselves the misery of the previous situation. We find some expression of it in Schiller's poems, but it was embodied in Richter. He knew the life of the people as no other German author: its realities were so branded into his nature that the ideal life, of which he and his readers dreamed, could not escape from them.

There is thus in his works that continual and almost painful vibration between two extremes, which is an echo of the general restlessness. Gervinus says, in reference to this characteristic: "you cannot walk with the classic cothurnus on one foot, and the other foot bare, without limping." It is true that both extremes are generally represented in the same character; but in the "*Flegeljahre*," they are divided; the hero Walt being the poetic and ideal, and his twin-brother Vult the practical nature. This is one of the least confusing of Richter's works, but it was never completed. He is skillful in presenting difficulties; but when it comes to a solution, he seems powerless. In "*Siebenkäs*" also the two characters are divided, the wife, Lenette, being the practical side of life; and most readers will therefore find both these works more satisfactory than "*Hesperus*" or "*Titan*," which are more ambitious in design. In them the general plot is quite hidden by the aberrations of the characters, and it would be very difficult to describe that of either in an intelligible way. The "Invisible Lodge" is simpler, and an outline of it can be given in a few words. A boy is taken, in infancy, and placed in comfortable subterranean chambers, where the few persons who attend to his needs and educate him impress upon his mind that the dark, narrow world which he knows is the real world. They describe to him sunshine, trees, flowers and all the varied appearances of nature as belonging to heaven,—a heaven

to be won by obedience, virtue and faith. His subterranean life is meant to symbolize ours: his transfer to the surface of the earth that of our souls to a higher and brighter sphere of existence. But the symbolism is only material, not moral and spiritual: the boy exchanges lamp-light for sunlight, color, the sounds of breezes, birds and streams and the bliss of the free air. On the other hand, he rises from the innocence and ignorance of his subterranean life to become acquainted with violence, selfishness and crime. Richter saw his mistake, afterwards, and called the work "a born ruin."

As a specimen of his simpler descriptive style, I will quote a passage, translated by Carlyle, from his autobiography, in which he gives us a picture of his father's household:

"To represent the Jodiz life of our Hans Paul,—for by this name we shall for a time distinguish him, yet ever changing it with others,—our best course, I believe, will be to conduct him through a whole Idyl-year; dividing the normal year into four seasons, as so many quarterly Idyls; four Idyls exhaust his happiness.

"For the rest, let no one marvel at finding an Idyl-kingdom and pastoral-world in a little hamlet and parsonage. In the smallest bed you can raise a tulip-tree, which shall extend its flowery boughs over all the garden; and the life-breath of joy can be inhaled as well through a window as in the open wood and sky. Nay, is not Man's Spirit (with all its infinite celestial-spaces) walled-in within a six-feet Body, with integuments, and Malpighian mucuses and capillary tubes; and has only five strait world-windows, of Senses, to open for the boundless, round-eyed, round-sunned All;—and yet it discerns and reproduces an All!

"Scarcely do I know with which of the four quarterly Idyls to begin; for each is a little heavenly forecourt to the next: however,

the climax of joys, if we start with Winter and January, will perhaps be most apparent. In the cold, our Father had commonly, like an Alpine herdsman, come down from the upper altitude of his study; and, to the joy of the children, was dwelling on the plain of the general family-room. In the morning, he sat by a window, committing his Sunday's sermon to memory; and the three sons, Fritz (who I myself am), and Adam, and Gottlieb carried, by turns, the full coffee-cup to him, and still more gladly carried back the empty one, because the carrier was then entitled to pick the unmelted remains of the sugar-candy (taken against cough) from the bottom thereof. Out of doors, truly, the sky covered all things with silence; the brook with ice, the village with snow: but in our rooms there was life; under the stove a pigeon-establishment; on the windows finch-cages; on the floor, the invincible bull brach, our *Bonne*, the night-guardian of the court-yard; and a poodle, and the pretty *Scharmantel* (Poll), a present from the Lady von Plotho;—and close by, the kitchen, with two maids; and farther off, against the other end of the house, our stable, with all sorts of bovine, swinish and feathered cattle, and their noises: the threshers with their flails, also at work within the court-yard, I might reckon as another item. In this way, with nothing but society on all hands, the whole male portion of the household easily spent their forenoon in tasks of memory, not far from the female portion, as busily employed in cooking.

"Holidays occur in every occupation; thus I too had my airing holidays,—analogous to watering holidays,—so that I could travel out in the snow of the court-yard, and to the barn with its threshing. Nay, was there a delicate embassy to be transacted in the village,—for example, to the schoolmaster, to the tailor,—I was sure to be despatched thither in the middle of my lessons; and thus I still got forth into the open air and the cold, and measured myself with the new snow. At noon, before our own dinner, we children might also, in the kitchen, have the hungry satisfaction to see the threshers fall-to and consume their victuals.

"The afternoon, again, was still more important, and richer in joys. Winter shortened and sweetened our lessons. In the long dusk, our Father walked to and fro; and the children, according to ability, trotted under his night-gown, holding by his hands. At sound of the vesper-bell, we placed ourselves in a circle, and in concert devotionally chanted the hymn, *Die finstre Nacht bricht stark herein* (The gloomy night is gathering round). Only in villages, not in

towns, where probably there is more night than day labor, have the evening chimes a meaning and beauty, and are the swan-song of the day: the evening-bell is as it were the muffle of the over-loud heart, and, like a *rance des vaches* of the plains, calls men from their running and toiling, into the land of silence and dreams. After a pleasant watching about the kitchen-door for the moonrise of candle-light, we saw our wide room at once illuminated and barricaded; to wit, the window-shutters were closed and bolted; and behind these window bastions and breastworks the child felt himself snugly nestled, and well secured against Knecht Ruprecht, who on the outside could not get in, but only in vain keep growling and humming."

Those passages in Richter's works which are considered purely sublime by his admirers,—wherein he is most earnest and profound—impress us like a mind wandering through Chaos, and only not bewildered because of intense faith in God and Man. Carlyle, in an article written soon after Richter's death, recognized his highest qualities in this eloquent passage: "His faculties are all of gigantic mould; cumbrous, awkward in their movements; large and splendid rather than harmonious or beautiful, yet joined in living union, and of force and compass altogether extraordinary. He has an intellect vehement, rugged, irresistible; crushing in pieces the hardest problems, piercing into the most hidden combinations of things and grasping the most distant: an imagination vague, sombre, splendid or appalling,—brooding over the abysses of Being, wandering through Infinitude, and summoning before us, in its dim religious light, shapes of brilliancy, solemnity or terror; a fancy of exuberance literally unexampled, for it pours forth its treasures with a lavishness which

knows no limits, hanging, like the sun, a jewel on every grass-blade, and sowing the Earth at large with orient pearl."

This is the testimony of an author who resembles Richter in the character of his humor and the arrogant individuality of his style. In regard to the latter, Carlyle quotes Lessing's phrase: "Every man has his own style, like his own nose," and adds: "True, there are noses of wonderful dimensions, but no nose can justly be amputated by the public." I think, however, that we have a right to object when the author insists on twisting and pinching his nose out of shape, or changing its natural hue into a shining redness, through the reckless intemperance of his fancy.

To illustrate Richter by quotations is like taking single trees out of a jungle where a thousand different kinds are matted together. There are remarkably few short passages which are complete when torn from the context. What he says of, or rather to, Music, has often been quoted—"Away! thou speakest of that which all my life I have passionately sought, which I never find, and never shall find!" Another fine expression is: "Unhappy is the man for whom his own mother has not made all other mothers venerable!" In matters of faith he was entirely independent, doubting or denying as his nature prompted; yet he says: "When in your last hour all faculty in the broken spirit shall fade

away and die into inanity—imagination, thought, effort, enjoyment—then at the last will the night-flower of Belief alone continue blooming, and refresh with its perfume in the closing darkness." Here is a brief passage which embodies an important truth: "Truthfulness is not so much a branch as a blossom of moral, manly strength. The weak, whether they will or not, must lie. As respects children, for the first five years they utter neither truth nor falsehood—they only speak. Their talk is thinking aloud; and as one-half of their thought is often an affirmative, and the other half a negative, and, unlike us, they express both, they often seem to lie while they are only talking with themselves."

I might multiply short quotations like these, but they would suggest a false rather than a true impression of the author. His glimpses of graver thought are generally coherent, because the exercise of his humor is suspended. It is also very difficult to reproduce the peculiar quality of his prose in a translation. Its singular, broken cadences, its promise of melodies which are always shattered by discords, require that the form should be almost as carefully retained as in translating poetry. The passages given by Carlyle are much the best translations, on account of the intellectual resemblances between him and Richter.

You will easily understand that a large class of readers are naturally repelled by Richter. In German criti-

cism you will find the most divergent estimates of his genius; but no judgment of a purely literary character can be just. His deep and tender humanity must be recognized, as we recognize it in Burns and Hood. In literary art, he is only a disorganizing element, while his moral power and influence have been wholly pure and beneficent. Even his vanity never offends us, for it is as candid and transparent as that of Hans Christian Andersen. That so much strength and weakness, so much delicacy and coarseness, so much knowledge and ignorance, so much melting sentiment and grotesque humor, should not only be co-existent, but mixed through and through one another, in the same brain, makes him a permanent phenomenon. There is nothing like him in the literature of any country. If we call him great, we shall find a thousand reasons for taking back the epithet; yet we cannot possibly press him back into any middle place. Nothing remains for us but to accept the term invented by his followers, and call him "*Der Einzige*"—"The Unique."

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